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DEVELOPMENT AS FREEDOM, FREEDOM AS EXCHANGES

**Understanding the relationship between forms of exchange
and human capabilities in a developmental context: the case
of Old-Alagados in Salvador de Bahia (Brazil)**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies

Development, Policy and Practice Unit

The Open University, UK

Submitted in September 2015

DATE OF SUBMISSION : 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

DATE OF AWARD : 21 JUNE 2016

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Abstract

Since the dawn of the new millennium, poverty and inequalities have become a central concern of development. Both phenomena are now recognised as multidimensional – i.e. beyond their material aspect – and the more predominant Human Development paradigm now condemns people's lack of (unequal) freedoms to be and do what they value, namely their capabilities (Sen, 2010: 93). Fighting poverty and inequalities represents a challenge: we need to understand how capabilities work and to define how to guarantee people's basic (if not equal) opportunities to be and do what they value. This thesis argues that analysing the relation between capabilities and exchanges in their substantive form – i.e. using a comprehensive theoretical definition and empirical approach – is key to such endeavour.

In a theoretical approach, the thesis adopts a Polanyian understanding of forms of integration (Polanyi, 1957b) in order to categorize exchanges as discrete patterns of distribution. Moreover, the thesis conceptually frames the normative understanding of social dynamics shaping poverty and inequalities through a combination of Sen's capability approach (CA) and Bourdieu's sociology of practice and theory of social reproduction. In an empirical approach, focusing on a disadvantaged yet dynamic neighbourhood of Salvador (Brazil), this doctoral research explores different exchanges in four formal and informal groups, and their members' relative capabilities.

As a result, the thesis offers a new categorisation of forms of exchange. It argues that the characteristics of such forms, but also additional structural, cultural and agency dynamics reproduce the people's unequal opportunities. Those are respectively: specific combinations of forms of exchange, the understanding of their role, suitability and value, and the different control and claim people may exert over exchanges or the empowerment

they experience through their exchange. Those elements matter since they influence the unequal empowerment of exchanges and shape their role in the (re)production of poverty and inequalities. The thesis finally discusses the array of possible exchanges, their actual understanding, articulation and the negotiation of their use for the (unequal) empowerment of the population, and more importantly, their potential for challenging practices and situations of disempowerment.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Theo Papaioannou and Helen Yanacopulos, my supervisors, for their ongoing support, patience and advice. This work would not be possible without the studentship of the Maths, Computing and Technology Faculty at the Open University. I would also like to thank the Development Policy and Practice Group at the Open University for providing the intellectual environment for doing this research.

I wish to thank all the informants who have accepted to share their experience with me with great interest and friendship. I am grateful to the audiences of the 2015 HDCA Annual Conference in Washington, the ISA Annual Convention 2014 in New Orleans, 'The Ethics of poverty alleviation' Conference in Salzburg, and the 2014 International Political Science Association World Congress in Montreal, for their constructive comments and suggestions on my work.

Last but not least, I am deeply indebted to my friends Diana, Mônica, Agnus, Luana, Aline and Reinildo for their amazing selves and support during my fieldwork. Moreover, this work would not have been possible without the never failing presence and comfort of Maayan, Fanny, Ania, my family and all my other friends.

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Glossary of Acronyms

ASCRA or ASCA	Accumulating saving and credit association
CA	Capability Approach
CAMA	Art and Environment Centre, Itapagipe Peninsula, Salvador (Centro de Arte e Meio Ambiente)
FEPEBBA	Federation of fisherman of the of Bahia (Federação dos Pescadores do Estado da Bahia)
IBGE	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística)
ICA	International Cooperative Alliance
IPEA	Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research (Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Apli
MdL	'Meninas da Laje', Umoja self-help group, also referred as Group 1
MTE-BA	Bahia Federal Delegation of the Federal Minister for Work and Employment (Delegacia do Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego da Bahia)
MTE-SRTE-BA	Sub-Secretary of MTE-BA in charge of the Solidarity Economy
Rede CAMMPI	Commission of articulation and mobilization of the locals of the Itapagipe peninsula (Comissão de articulação dos moradores da Península de Itapagipe)
ROSCA	Rotating saving and credit association
RRCB	Recycling Cooperative Complex of Bahia (Complexo Cooperativo de Reciclagem da Bahia)
SeA	'So entre amigos', Umoja self-help group, also referred as Group 2
SEDES	Bahia State Secretary in charge of Social Development and of the Fight against Poverty (Secretaria Municipal de Desenvolvimento, Trabalho e Emprego)
SEMPs	Salvador Municipal Secretary in charge of Social Development and of the Fight against Poverty (Secretaria Municipal de Promoção Social, Esporte e Combate à Pobreza)
SEPPIR	Secretariat federal for the Promotion of Racial Equality of Brazil (Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial da Presidência da República)
SETRE	Bahia State Secretary for Work, Employment, Revenue and Sports (Secretaria do Trabalho, Emprego, Renda e Esporte)
SETRE-SESOL	Bahia Sub-Secretary of the SETRE in charge of Solidarity Economy (Superintendência de Economia Solidária)
SINDIFEIRA	Union of the traders and hawkers of the city of Salvador (Sindicato dos Vendedores Ambulantes e dos Feirantes da Cidade do Salvador)
SJDHDS	Bahia State Secretary of Justice Citizenship and Human Rights (Secretaria de Justiça, Direitos Humanos e Desenvolvimento Social)
SJDHDS-PROCON	Sub-Secretary of the SJDHDS in charge of Consumers Protection (Superintendência de Proteção ao Consumidor)
SJDHDS-SUDH	Salvador Sub-Secretary of the SJDHDS in charge of human rights (Superintendência de Apoio e Defesa aos Direitos Humanos)
UFBA	Federal University of Bahia (Universidade Federal da Bahia)

I have been working as a street-based social worker in local non-governmental organisations – looking after street children in Romania, disadvantaged teenagers in the suburbs of Paris and rough-sleepers in London. Social work, echoing dominant development paradigms, promotes the insertion of people into the (labour) market, the provision of basic services (health, education) and the controlled redistribution of social benefits. These play a central role in poor people's empowerment. By people's empowerment, I refer to the expansion of people's opportunities, abilities and/or choices to be and do what they value, i.e. their capabilities (Sen, 2009).¹ Despite progress in conceptualising poverty and inequalities as multidimensional, the administrative pressure for demonstrating the impact of social work practice in terms of 'measurable' achievements, leaves social workers with the impossibility of accounting for the 'quality' of people's (dis)empowering abilities and context. By the quality of their (dis)empowering abilities and context, I mean a deep knowledge of the condition in which each person may gain material or other forms of support resources, and opportunities which will enable their choices. Therefore, my experience as a social worker also illustrates not only the gap between human development theories, social policies and practices which so far, miss encompassing a more subtle knowledge of the different dynamics conditioning empowerment in their projects. As other social workers, I was dealing with the incongruity

¹ For a detailed discussion of the different definitions which were given to the term empowerment by development scholars, see Ibrahim & Alkire (2007). Most scholars refer to the expansion of one's agency, whether as 'the *ability* to act on behalf of what you value and have reason to value' or 'the *institutional environment* which offers people the opportunity to exert agency fruitfully' (Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007: 8). However, I believe that those definitions permeate Sen's moral argument that expanding capabilities should matter for people's sake only, by associating of the notion of empowerment with the expansion of one's agency (see Chapter 2). To avoid a methodological hiatus in endorsing Sen's 'ethical ontologism', the notion of empowerment in this thesis refers back to (the main constituents of) one's capabilities.

of a practice anchored in generic institutional tools aiming to compensate institutional failures financially and through the provision of services, but distanced from people's reality. This led me to think of positive and negative social ties which underpin (dis)empowerment along with institutional schemes, and to consider them as a central concern of their (missed) choices and opportunities, which we should make sense of and aim to support. I came to consider the diversity of exchanges² upon which people rely in order to function, their different compelling forces and the opportunities, constraints or contradictions that they offer for the empowerment of their participants.

Brazil is a country, in which, until recently, economic development projects and policies have completely ignored the poor population. When living there, I was captivated by the wealth of non-market and non-state exchanges in which poor people are actually involved in order to function. Observing their slow recognition by the state as a new interest for development has also inspired this research project. It represented the opportunity to evidence and to comprehend the (dis)empowering strength of exchanges beyond market and social protection, and to contemplate to what extent actual development policies may account for, and promote, the relation between exchanges and people's capabilities.³

This introductory chapter will firstly discuss the importance and the scope of this study through its focus on the diversity of exchanges of the substantive economy. Such definition of the economy aims at encompassing the different systems of production, circulation and exchange in an empirical rather than a formal definition of the economy;

² By exchanges, I mean recurring patterns of circulation of goods and services (Polanyi, 1944) and of social interaction (Fiske, 1992) which also structure our daily practices, whether or not guided by the search for profit, or happening across social fields.

³ A detailed discussion of the pertinence of Brazil as a specific site for carrying the empirical research is developed in section 4.3.1, p.135.

that is to say in opposition to the reduction of the economy to the association of exchanges with markets and profit-making exchanges. Secondly, it will provide an overview of Polanyi's approach, in order to attempt a categorisation of different forms of exchange upon which this thesis builds. Thirdly, reviewing the advantages and limits which a Polanyian approach offers, it introduces the gaps the research needs to address both at theoretical and empirical levels, to enquire into the relation between exchanges and capabilities⁴. This section explains how combining Karl Polanyi's approach with Amartya Sen's Capability approach (CA) and Pierre Bourdieu's sociology would help to address the question at a theoretical level. Fourthly, it summarises the findings and arguments developed through the empirical investigation. Fifthly, it examines the interest of research, and explains why it matters. Finally, the last section of the introduction presents the content of the thesis.

1.1. The 'exchange - capability' relation

It is erroneous to think that people only depend on state redistribution, public services and their insertion into the formal market to cope with their poverty and social disadvantage. The poor are involved daily in many social and economic relations of exchange away from the market and the state in order to function. Yet, according to their nature, those exchanges may also represent obligations that prevent them from functioning as they wish, even when opportunities may elsewhere be guaranteed. Therefore these exchanges matter, since they may help people not only to improve their standard of living,

⁴ The concepts of freedoms and capabilities are used interchangeably in this thesis according to Sen's definition. Both choices and opportunities compose capabilities in a Senian approach. Yet, since the thesis adopts a minimal focus on people's 'choices', freedoms and capabilities also conflate with the concept of 'opportunities'.

but also to achieve valued life-styles, or may limit their choices and opportunities to do so. To understand the different importance of such exchanges, this research therefore addresses the following question:

How do forms of exchange contribute to people's empowerment in capabilities?

This thesis aims to understand theoretically and empirically the complexity of exchanges in which people are involved, and how they shape unequal levels of empowerment. To do so, this research offers a new theoretical framework based on the work of Polanyi, Sen and Bourdieu and an empirical research based on the study of exchange groups taking place in a poor neighbourhood of Salvador, Brazil.

In this thesis, I therefore focus and aim to make sense of development as an immanent process of changes happening in society. The primacy is given here to the observation of the 'exchange - capability' relation, and to a certain extent, sidesteps discussing development as an intentional practice (Cowen and Shenton, 1996: 162). Therefore, I conceive the dynamics of development studied as inherent to all societies and not just a characteristic of developing countries. I however reckon politics and the state as structures that would influence the degree and nature of such immanent changes. This particularly motivates the choice of Brazil as a particularly pertinent site to investigate the immanent relationship between exchanges and capabilities. Such circumvention of the focus of the thesis does not invalidate looking at development as an intentional practice, or at the role of the state in this endeavour. It rather aims to capture the coherence with and relative impact of development projects over the immanent process of development that the 'exchange - capability' relation induces, and which development projects may or may not foment.

1.2. A Polanyian approach of exchanges

Karl Polanyi boosted, alongside authors like Mauss (1966), the creation of the discipline of economic sociology. Economic sociology⁵ discusses both the nature and the diversity of the forms of exchange. Polanyi was the first to categorise and to compare forms of exchange and their importance for development. Yet, most researchers of the discipline have later focused their study on the market as a form of exchange quite distinct from social exchanges, on mercantile structures, and on the (dis)embeddedness of market institutions (e.g. François, 2008; Steiner, 2005). Thus, Polanyi remains a major reference in the attempt to understand the characteristics and underlying principles of ‘social’ forms of integration structuring the plurality of economies.

Polanyi considered the diversity of exchanges as ‘forms of integration of the economy’⁶ and systems of ‘production and distribution of goods whether monetary or non-monetary, material or immaterial (...) [as] a function of the social, in which it is contained’ (Polanyi, 1944: 71). Polanyi identified three forms – redistribution, reciprocity and householding – alongside market exchanges.

Each form provides ‘unity and stability’ to the ‘empirical economies’ (Polanyi in Servet, 2007: 261) ruling material or immaterial circulations thought of as ‘spheres of activity that make up the economy in a substantive sense’ (Hillenkamp et al., 2013: 5).

⁵ The object of the discipline is to thwart the ‘amalgam between exchanges and the market’ endorsed in the economics discipline and that have ‘hindered the comprehension of exchange’s diversity’. ‘Exchanges are understood, not as a system in which individuals intervene on objects through prices, but as a system of relations between people through regulated circulations’ (Lévi-Strauss, 1987: 28).

⁶ I retain the terms ‘forms of exchange’ instead of the Polanyian term ‘forms of integration’ since this study focuses on the social aspects of exchanges, more than on the economic aspects of integrations. Therefore, it omits partially the phase of ‘production’ of goods and services that defines, along with the ‘distribution’, the notion of integration adopted by Polanyi. It also distances an approach more focused on the economic, monetary and material aspects of exchanges, for a social and cultural account of the norms that rule forms of exchange.

Each form of exchange is defined by an institutional pattern shaping circulations of goods, and a corresponding behavioural pattern determining participants' conducts, described in the following table:

Forms of integration	Principles of integration (institutional patterns)	Rules of behaviour (behavioural patterns)
Redistribution	centricity	division of labour
Reciprocity	symmetry/ duality	mutual obligation
Householding	autarchy	close group rules
Market	gain seeking	Barter

TABLE 1: POLANYI'S FORMS OF INTEGRATION

Following Polanyi's model, redistribution, according to the institutional pattern of centricity, implies that the elements converge first to be redistributed later. Corresponding behaviour entails the acceptance of the division of labour and the condemnation of envy toward others (Polanyi, 1944: 47-50). Reciprocity relies on the institutional pattern of symmetry, and on duality and mutual obligation as relative principles of behaviour. Householding is the most problematic pattern to define. Evoked as a minor form of integration, Polanyi associated it with autarchy as an institutional pattern, and to closed groups' behavioural rules (Polanyi, 1944: 53-4).⁷ These forms (reciprocity, redistribution and householding) presuppose that individuals are involved in voluntary interdependences complying with global societal rules (Polanyi, 1944: 48-9). By contrast, the market demands special attention as it does not have strict parity with the others: 'markets' are

⁷ The close circulation of goods – auto-production and auto-consumption – evoked through the notion of autarchy might delimit the form. Polanyi's approach to householding is however inconsistent. He considers families to provide an example of this form. He also argues that when this form is observed, exchanges can be organised between equals or following a hierarchy. Polanyi then inadvertently linked householding to redistribution or reciprocity (Servet, 2007), raising a question about its nature as a specific form of integration. The unclarity of the concept led many, like Schaniel and Neale (2000), to disregard this form.

institutions designed only for the function of ‘market exchanges’, and independent from social rules (Polanyi, 1944: 56).⁸ Market exchanges have a different essence: the logic of barter and of maximisation of gains regulates both production and distribution.

Schaniel and Neale (2000) offer a visualisation of the ‘flows’ realised through such forms. Although their understanding of the forms has the merit of communicating visually their essence, it restricts the content to institutional patterns.⁹

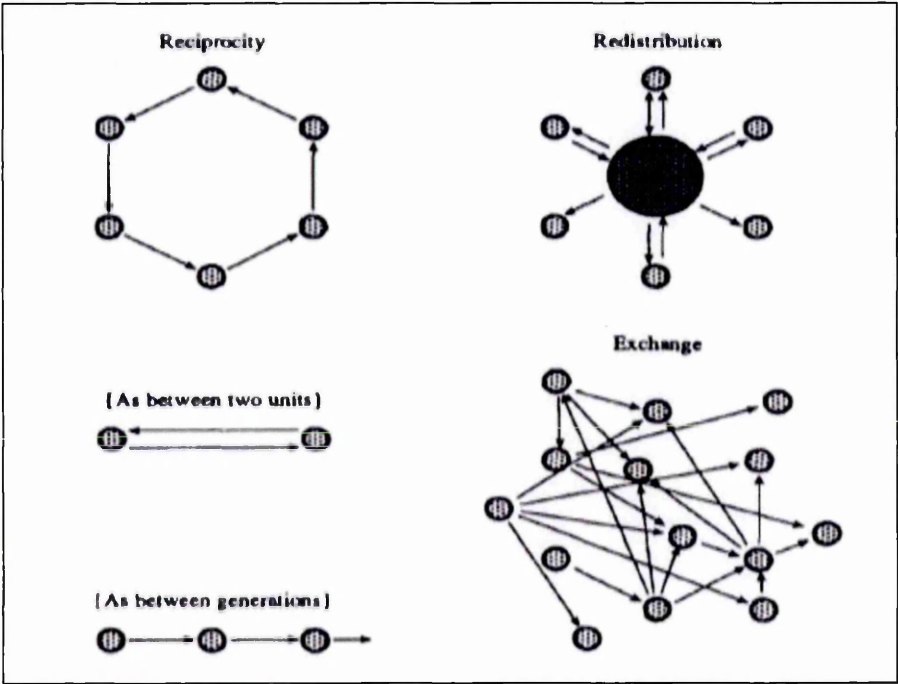


FIGURE 1: SCHEMATIC MAP OF THE INSTITUTIONAL PATTERN OF THE FORMS OF INTEGRATION, SOURCE SCHANIEL AND NEALE (2000)

Therefore, forms of exchange

represent ideal modalities of interdependence (...): interdependence resulting mechanically from price fluctuations in the case of the market; interdependence

⁸ Polanyi equally used the term exchange interchangeably with the notion of market forms. I preferred to use only the latter, so as not to confuse the reader.

⁹ Schaniel and Neale denounced the association of ‘institutional [with] emotional or attitudinal content’ – ‘e.g. generosity to reciprocity, authoritarian power to redistribution, and selfishness to market’ (2000: 89). According to the authors, their graphs of the different forms of exchange encapsulate their institutional specificities and automatically grasp their behavioural level, whether they appear in totally kind or equally brutal manifestation – slavery, charity, etc. This thesis will refute such simplification.

based on centralized systems in the case of redistribution; instituted complementarity, for example based on a symmetric pattern, in the case of reciprocity; and lastly, interdependence within a group through sharing – usually a domestic group – in the case of householding.

(Hillenkamp et al., 2013: 5)

Polanyi explained that taken all together, these four forms govern ‘empirical economies’ in a timeless measure, and are concomitant in all societies (Polanyi, 1944: 29). Moreover, Polanyi was also the first to question the causal relation between the (social and political promotion of the) use of a particular exchange and, what we could call ‘the human development of society’¹⁰.

1.3. Overcoming Polanyi’s gaps

This thesis particularly builds on a Polanyian categorisation of exchanges, renew his concern for their social development impact, and yet it challenges the legacy of his work. Two main theoretical and empirical gaps explain the necessity to articulate Polanyi to Sen and Bourdieu’s work and to gather further empirical evidence.¹¹

On the one hand, theoretical concerns arise from the fact that Polanyi used his categorisation of exchanges as a tactic for the development of his anti-liberal argument, which however ignored discussing the criteria of his analysis (such as why he considered exchanges as either evil or socially compatible). Moreover, his work, inscribed in a highly political context and debate over the development paradigms of his time, has entrenched an interpretation of exchanges as homogeneously instituted into ‘sectors’ of the economy as

¹⁰ I realise that using the term of ‘development’ here represents an anachronism, yet I consider that Polanyi has outlined the premises of a concern for what is now coined as economic and social development.

¹¹ The gaps summarised here will be explored in more detail in later chapters.

organised (market, state and third-sector). It therefore reifies an opposed understanding of the latter's role for development, which still deeply affect actual political debates, paradigms and practices. On the contrary, this thesis does not support such an interpretation, and revisits the notion of 'forms of integration' to refine an understanding of exchanges and of their persistent and changing use within the different sectors of the economy.

This research addresses this gap, resituating the Polanyian focus on exchanges within contemporary developmental concerns for the fight against poverty and inequalities. Sen demonstrates that deprivation relates to the distribution of capabilities rather than of resources. The thesis therefore adopts Sen's view of the expansion of one's set of capabilities as a central project of development. Through such a focus, the CA offers an alternative for assessing valued changes happening in society through the evolution of 'advantages and disadvantages of a person' (Sen, 2009: 296): their opportunities, and freedom of choice. Such a framework is also highly valuable for its attempts to furnish a realisation-focused frame of assessment, which allows us to move away from arrangement-focused perspectives adopted in previous theories of justice, and from which an understanding of the institutional 'fairness' of state, markets, or the third-sector arrangements have pervaded. It also allows to depart from the moral and political space of evaluation of social justice (money, utility, wellbeing) offered by previous institutional approaches.¹²

On the other hand, Polanyi did not base his work on empirical observation, but developed his categorisation on the basis of ethnographic and historical literatures from both the oriental and western world. Through those, he tried to account for changes

¹² These arguments will be developed in sections 2.1, p.31 and 2.2, p.40

happening in Europe and in the 19th century. However, he missed understanding the role of social norms in exchanges, and the way that they may not only mediate 'human development', but also (re)produce their unfair character. Similar critiques can be made in the case of Sen: he misses making sense of the social and contextual influences and arrangements that shape people's (unequal) capabilities. This leads us to look for a complementary approach to make sense of the social dynamics behind exchanges and their role in the (re)production of social (dis)advantages.

Bourdieu's sociology helps to complement both Polanyi and Sen in three ways. Firstly, the continuity between Bourdieu's concept of capitals, and Sen's understanding of capabilities and functionings, helps to make sense of the unequal social distribution of capability. Effectively, according to Bourdieu, one's position in society is shaped by, and shapes one's set of capitals (whether economic, social, cultural or symbolic) and habits. Secondly, beyond this social account of poverty as a relational and relative deprivation, Bourdieu explains the social norms structuring the conditional access to resources. This starts making sense of the social reproduction of people's opportunities and functionings by highlighting dynamics of entitlement mediated through social acquaintance and exchanges. Norms in different social areas (or fields) structure the organisation of society and the position of actors. Thirdly, a Bourdieusian framework allows understanding of institutions – e.g. the state or the market – as dominant actors of fields – e.g. political or economic – promoting a dominant interpretation of social norms. It sets their power within and across fields over the reproduction of inequalities, through a symbolic treatment of others and their entitlements. This is particularly important for assessing how the state relates to the exchanges developed in society, such as the third-sector exchanges, and legitimates immanent entitlements and mediations of capabilities.

The combination of Polanyi, Sen and Bourdieu gives shape to a conceptual framework of interpretation of the 'exchange - capability' relation. The framework

provides a robust basis for addressing the research question at a theoretical level. However, even though the three authors have in some respect considered the role of exchanges or social relations for the unequal distribution of people's (dis)advantages in the society, they have never considered exchange as a central element in one's empowerment. This justifies the empirical approach designed.

An in-depth qualitative analysis took place in Salvador, capital of the state of Bahia, Brazil, during the first half of 2013. It was designed to gain evidence on the 'exchange - capability' relation in four different groups of exchange, in a poor yet dynamic neighbourhood. Those are a local market, and groups of exchange of the third-sector that pursue varying social aims: a women self-help saving group, an association of artisanal fishermen, and a scavenger cooperative. They are formal and informal groups within which specific and relatively constant exchange happens. The data has been gathered mainly through semi-structured interviews with members and leaders of the groups. They enquire into the characteristics of the exchanges taking place within the groups and the kind of functionings and capabilities that the interviewees gained through those.

The thesis sets out to use theory as the basis for creating a new analytical framework within which to make sense of the 'exchange - capability' relation in a developmental context. The intention has been to lay the foundations of an empirical theory that can make sense of such relation in more general terms, and to illustrate the central importance of exchanges in their diverse forms for shaping (in)equalitarian societies. Therefore, the analysis presented here does not offer a detailed portrayal of the case studies, but rather highlights the main features and elements of influence of the 'exchange - capability' relation studied through specific cases in Brazil.

1.4. Argument and findings

The central argument of the thesis is that people's relative (dis)empowerment is shaped (in an immanent process of change in society) through the specific forms of exchange in which they engage, but also through additional structural, cultural and agency dynamics that modify the empowering potential of such exchanges. This argument develops in three fundamental steps.

Firstly, the thesis offers a new categorisation of forms of exchange captured in the empirical data. It makes sense of the characteristics and nature of six different forms. If *householding* may represent the absence of distributive patterns, particular (procedural, behavioural and managerial) patterns define and enable the continuity of the other forms of exchange. Most forms are shaped according to how social actors consider each other's position in the social structure (or their distinctive relation to objects and/or activities) – *status-led*, *equality-matching*, *mutual-assistance* or *equal-opportunity* exchanges. Exchanges guided by cost-benefit analysis – *profit-seeking exchanges* – may at first seem to differ from the previous ones. Understanding people's (lack of) capabilities therefore raised the question of their unequal experience and relative treatment according to forms of exchange.

Secondly, the thesis reviews the extent to which exchanges mediate the access and unequal distribution of human capabilities. In the different groups investigated, exchanges have enabled three essential opportunities for people: firstly, the ability to socialise and to function in a particular *status-quo*; secondly, the ability to access and renew their resources, which facilitate and help to maintain differed functionings; thirdly, the ability to resolve distributive concerns. Those abilities however vary according to the different forms that enable them. Forms of exchange effectively tend to be grounded in different principles of social inequality, and to legitimate unequal structures of opportunity to function or to

gather resources. They offer different schemes of interpretation and production of the social order, shaping (un)equal principles of social appreciation and endowment of people. Exchanges therefore regulate and create tangible differences in terms of functionings and capabilities – i.e. the spaces and levels of people's opportunity to function - between people.

Those different schemes of (dis)entitlement however become complex through the adjustment of different forms of exchange in our daily practices. Therefore, profit-seeking exchanges encompass social actors' perceptions of their relative social position and symbolic social values through their latent dependence on social exchanges. Similarly to the others forms of exchange, those latter exchanges are 'embedded' in the social norms of the fields in which they are inserted. The articulation of different forms of exchange reflects their complex complementarity and competitive entanglement, but also frames the empowering potential of the exchange. The complex combination of forms may modify or reinforce the nature and intensity of their unequal empowering outcome. The structure that forms of exchange represent for enabling and facilitating people's unequal capabilities is therefore complex and equivocal, building on their associations within social spaces and allowing different meanings and social outcomes.

Moreover, forms of exchange are coupled with symbolic and cultural norms relative to the social spaces or fields in which they take place. This materialises the unequal social value and consideration of the people involved (the object of their exchange or their lifestyles), into the weighted apportionment of their functionings and the resources which they may or not access. Norms may also modulate the restricted use of some forms of exchange or their related resources, or disvalue the use of forms of exchange themselves.

Thirdly, the thesis explains the two forms of people's agency over exchanges and the negotiation of their empowerment process. It argues that people or groups may influence the objective structures – i.e. relative to their objective resources and endowments – or

subjective structures – i.e. relative to the symbolic interpretation of their objective resources and endowments – that shape the levels and nature of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation.

On the one hand, individuals and collectives have gained greater opportunities through their accumulation of resources and functionings. Through such control, people develop the ability to maintain their opportunity to function, or choose to function through different, more discriminative, exchanges, through which they may ultimately develop further capabilities. Therefore, one’s inability to accumulate resources may worsen his/her unequal opportunity to maintain a function, or to access resources and to further empowering exchanges.

On the other hand, individuals and collectives have raised their level of empowerment getting involved in struggles over the legitimate principles that rule their treatment through exchanges in different fields. Groups raise claims over their relative level of social (mis)recognition and economic (mal-)reward in exchange, which lead to their relative disempowerment. They may also raise claims over their relative level of legal (mis)protection and political (mis)representation, which guarantee their levels of empowerment through exchange. People’s and groups’ ability to negotiate their empowerment through exchanges matters in order to account comprehensively for the ‘exchange - capability’ relation, and for its role for social justice.

1.5. Why does this study matter?

This research develops a new understanding of the relative capability deprivation experienced by members of the four groups of exchanges of Salvador taken as case studies. Their level of capabilities corresponds to the outcome of a (dis)advantageous use of different forms of exchange or their particular combinations, which may be reinforced

through the symbolic understanding of forms' association with distributive matters, social values and cultural constraints. People's deprivation is also the effect of their (relative or absolute) inability to accumulate resources or to pursue game-changing struggles and social, economic, legal, and representative claims.

Such an approach matters essentially because it challenges the common perception of the dynamics sustaining poverty (i.e. capability deprivation) and inequalities (i.e. unequal capabilities as opportunities to be and do what one values). Rather than seeing these as simply the fruit of unfair institutions or 'malfunctioning' individuals, it shows that poverty and inequalities are inscribed into our social relations and the opportunities they give us, materialised in exchanges.

More importantly, this thesis is significant because it not only informs us about exchanges as an important source of (dis)empowerment, but also offers a framework that aims to overcome many moral and political assumptions regarding the positive or negative role of market-exchanges (or growth), or the welfare state (or benefits, services and policies) for human development. Discussing how the negotiation of practices of exchange may restructure the social and political distribution of human capabilities can finally open up fruitful debates on exchanges' instrumental role for practices of development toward guaranteeing people's freedom. As a significant consequence, it provides lessons for improving actual paradigms of social justice (and particularly Sen's CA), by assessing development as an immanent process, which social projects may enhance, particularly if in accordance with actual moral concerns for the (egalitarian) promotion of people's capabilities.

1.6. Content of the thesis

Following this first introductory chapter, Chapters 2 and 3 present the literature review and the conceptual framework upon which the research rests. Chapter 2 discusses the adoption of the capability approach as the most pertinent space of analysis of the distinctive empowering processes of exchanges. The chapter addresses two of Polanyi's theoretical gaps: his comparative account of the 'evil' of non-embedded exchanges, and the later (mis)association of exchanges with institutions.

Chapter 3 discusses how Bourdieu's work greatly complements Sen and Polanyi. A parallel between the concept of capitals and capability helps to make sense of the unequal social distribution of the latter. Moreover, it accounts for the norms of entitlement and symbolic orders combined with exchanges, which structure the unequal mediation of capabilities. Therefore, the different forms of exchange, which mould people's set of capabilities, can be appraised according to their role in the reproduction of social inequalities.

Chapter 4 explains the case study methodology and methods adopted to carry out the empirical investigation of this research, through a qualitative sociological enquiry. It exposes the choices involved in the implementation of the research and the practical aspects of the data collection.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the empirical findings of the thesis and the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 answers the following question: *What are the characteristics and dynamics underlying exchanges? How do they mediate specific capabilities?* It reviews the six basic forms of exchange that are observed in the different groups studied, and uncovers the different functionings they mediate. The chapter first argues that a new categorisation, departing from Polanyi's categories, appears crucial for analysing the role of different forms of exchange in relation to people's (relative) deprivation of capabilities. Forms of

exchange enable basic capabilities, and prove to be essential in the empowerment of people. They also shape their unequal sets of capabilities. Understanding people's (lack of) capabilities therefore leads to the question of their unequal experience and relative treatment according to forms of exchange.

Chapter 6 answers the following question: *To what extent do forms of exchange structure people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities?* The chapter argues that the complex structural combinations between forms of exchange, and cultural interpretations of their value and use, influence the (in)egalitarian nature of exchanges. It discusses how the entanglement of the forms of exchange, along with the cultural interpretation of exchanges, may reinforce or bind the empowering potential of the forms, or the social inequalities they justify.

Chapter 7 addresses the following question: *To what extent can people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities be associated with people's agency over exchanges?* It exposes groups and individual's ability to negotiate forms of exchange as the structures of their (dis)entitlement, and argues that people's agency matters in shaping their relative level of capabilities – i.e. people's and groups' power over the realisation of their valued objectives.

Chapter 8 concludes this thesis. It summarises the knowledge raised in this thesis regarding the 'exchange - capability' relation, and notes its decisive role for one's empowerment. It summarises the focus, research questions, findings and interest of the research, and introduces future research and debates that the findings suggest. It argues for the importance of this research for addressing and overcoming many cleavages that still dominate debates in development studies.

Chapter 2. Sen: The Capability Approach

This first theoretical chapter argues that the concept of capability offers a valid framework for assessing the social outcome of forms of exchange. It addresses two main gaps in the Polanyian approach: the lack of an evaluative framework and the mis-association of forms of exchange with principles of justice, themselves associated with market and state institutions. Sen's interpretation of poverty and inequalities, developed in the capability approach (CA), effectively not only revolutionised previous institutionalist distributive accounts, but also offers a new framework to revise liberal and socialist assumptions of the role of exchange institutions. Traditionally, poverty and inequalities have been examined through distributive models aimed at defining 'how a society or group should allocate its scarce resources or products among individuals with competing needs or claims' (Roemer in Jackson, 2005: 356). Those institutional understandings of justice, debating fair processes of redistribution, echo a Polanyian perception of the validity of the forms of integration. By contrast, Sen prefers to assess the realisation of justice rather than the fairness of institutional arrangements, and to re-centre the focus on empowerment as a development for the sake of individuals. However, the CA appears to be limited in two respects: its implementation as a model of social justice and its account of social structures.

The first section of this chapter identifies the gaps in Polanyi's approach. These gaps, it is argued, can be closed through a Senian focus on capabilities. The second section presents the main features and objectives of the CA. The third section argues that despite the potential of embracing the CA, it presents a limited understanding of people's capabilities, and offers neither a solid framework of justice, nor a clear strategy for development. The fourth section shows the limits of the approach, which overlooks social dynamics that shape poverty and inequalities. The chapter concludes that Sen's CA

offers a valid evaluative framework with which to assess forms of exchange and to complete a Polanyian approach. However, the combination of both approaches neither make sense of social dynamics guaranteeing people's capabilities, nor raise their role in shaping the reproduction of social inequalities as a concern for social justice.

2.1. Gaps in Polanyi's theory

Polanyi's approach to the role of exchanges for the development of society presents different gaps, a few of which can be addressed by embracing the CA.¹³ Theoretical issues arise from Polanyi's categorisation of exchanges as a tactic for the development of his anti-liberal argumentation. On the one hand, he fails to discuss the criteria of his analysis of exchanges as either evil or socially compatible. On the other hand, his work, inserted into a highly political context and debate, has been part of an entrenched confusion of logics of exchanges associated with the opposition of the market and state institutions. It has contributed to segmented understandings of, and debates about, the developmental interest of the different sectors of the economy (state, market and recently the third-sector), which still deeply affect actual paradigms and practices of development.

2.1.1. A step toward his argument

Polanyi devoted a small part of his work to the analysis of the forms of integration. His emphasis on the differences between the market and other exchanges essentially constituted an argumentative tactic to describe not only the 'evil' created by market exchanges inducing progressively a process of disembeddedness of society from social

¹³ The next chapter will present other gaps relating to Polanyi's approach, and echoing gaps in Sen's approach, especially addressed by embracing a Bourdieusian approach.

norms, but also the double movement, which he thought regulated the impact of markets in western liberal societies throughout the 19th century.

According to Polanyi, society became embedded when market institutions were designed for the global realisation of the logic of barter. The market expanded to rule the economic integration of fictitious commodities ¹⁴ and caused behavioural principles opposed to gain-seeking to vanish. It is the adoption of market behaviour that Polanyi considered as a crucial source of transformation: 'Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system' (Polanyi, 1944: 57). Slow changes in the combination of behavioural and structural patterns, as an historical and evolutionary phenomenon, led to the dominance of the market. Economy guided through market values, slowly replaced a society in which markets were anchored in other social relations.

However, he observed, since the 19th century, the appearance of a double movement as resistance to this change: social protection developed against the liberal movement, which was pushing the embeddedness of society into market arrangements.

It can be personified as the action of two organizing principles in society, each of them setting itself specific institutional aims, having the support of definite social forces and using its own distinctive methods. The one was the principle of economic liberalism, aiming at the establishment of a self-regulating market, relying on the support of the trading classes, and using largely laissez-faire and free trade as its methods; the other was the principle of social protection aiming at the conservation of man and nature as well as productive organization, relying on the varying support of those most immediately affected by the deleterious action of the market-primarily, but not exclusively, the working and

¹⁴ Polanyi (1944: 72) defined fictitious commodities as elements not intrinsically produced for sale (such as land, labour and money), and whose integration into the market economy makes their description as commodities 'entirely fictitious':

The commodity fiction, therefore, supplies a vital organizing principle in regard to the whole of society affecting almost all its institutions in the most varied way, namely, the principle according to which no arrangement or behavior should be allowed to exist that might prevent the actual functioning of the market mechanism on the lines of the commodity fiction.

the landed classes – and using protective legislation, restrictive associations, and other instruments of intervention as its methods.

(Polanyi, 1944: 132)

‘Liberalism’ tends towards the establishment of the self-regulating market, while ‘social protection’ seeks the protection of man and nature but also productive organisations. Social protection is described as a principle encompassed by the state and unions in opposition to market injunctions. Moreover, Polanyi explained that the development of the market economy could not go ahead without the development of social protection. Polanyi’s analysis was rooted in contemporary oppositions between socialist/communist and liberal political doctrines.

2.1.2. The lack of an evaluative framework

Offering an economic sociology highly influenced by Marx (Scott, 2012), Polanyi sees in the opposed definition of socially-led vs. market exchanges, the divide between exchanges socially compatible or not. In such statements, he neglects discussing his criteria for assessing exchanges as either evil or socially suitable. Yet Polanyi (1944: 144-5) ‘assert[s] that the inherent absurdity of the idea of a self-regulating market system would have eventually destroyed society’, and that the market economy constitutes ‘a threat to the human and natural components of the social fabric’ (1944: 151).

On the one hand, even though Polanyi focused on the concerns raised by the ongoing commodification of land, labour and nature, he did not clearly explain how markets produce evil, either in absolute terms or in comparison to others forms of integration. Maucourant (2001: 7) supposes that the evils, which Polanyi associated with market exchange, reflect on Polanyi’s earlier analysis of totalitarianism. For Polanyi, in a totalitarian setting, people cooperate by producing goods interacting not with one with another, but with the product. Nothing has a substance unless objectivised, that is to say impersonal. According to Maucourant, the impersonalisation of society might have been

what Polanyi identified as the evil produced by the widespread form of market institutions and their 'totalitarian' use.

On the other hand, Polanyi (1944: 130) also does not explain through which mechanisms social protection (and the social forms of exchange it entails) counteracts this evil or the 'incompatible (...) self-regulation of the market, and thus [of] the market system itself'.

Concerned with the double movement of marketisation and protection of society, Polanyi (1944) probably idealized society as a source of protection. He neglected the fact that 'historically, the meanings and norms that have served to embed markets have often been hierarchical and exclusionary'.

(Fraser, 2013: 50)

Polanyi (1944: 149) proposes a tautological explanation that 'the universal "collectivist" reaction against the expansion of market economy in the second half of the nineteenth century [is a] conclusive proof of the peril to society inherent in the utopian principle of a self-regulating market'. Such argument constitutes a tautological explanation: confuses his teleological analysis of the social role that redistributive institutions in western society fulfil, not only with the nature of the institution, but also with the main forms of exchange they adopt, and this, instead of providing an explanation of the mechanisms that lead the later to cause the former. Consequently, Polanyi missed discussing what he considered is necessary to secure in society; he only points at what he fears represents a threat.

It led Fraser (2011: 144) to argue that 'Polanyi romanticizes society', and Sparsam et al. (2014: 4) to comment that 'reading 'The Great Transformation' Polanyi seems to be taken in by a rather black-and-white picture of the market vs. society'. Therefore, I argue that, in order to provide a comparative analysis of the contribution of forms of exchange to development, we need to discuss the aim of development – i.e. its social end – and the space through which we could assess its progress – its evaluative framework. Endorsing the current social justice focus on people's capabilities will help to update a Polanyian

approach with contemporary concerns of development, through which we may assess the role of different forms of exchange.

2.1.3. The fair nature of exchanges and institutions

As a parallel matter, Polanyi used the term ‘form’ to describe the diversity of economic integration, ‘because [forms] do not imply a particular institutional content; they do not describe specific institutions’ (Schaniel and Neale, 2000: 100). For Jessop (2001: 214), Polanyi

distinguish[es] forms of economic life in terms of their principles of distribution rather than their relations of production’ in order to take distance with the embeddedness of ‘process of production (...) in a wide variety of institutions. (...) Thus, he argued that, whilst it was often hard analytically to disentangle production from other social activities, one could generally identify the operational principles governing resource distribution.

However, despite this conceptual attempt, a certain ambiguity in Polanyi’s writings partially caused the (mis-)association of institutions with forms of exchange and with principles of fairness, which equivocally served his anti-liberal statement. Polanyi’s writings tend to reify industry, polity and kinship – in other words, the mercantile institutions, state social protection, the familial and what would later encompass the third-sector – in their respective associations with the market, centralised redistribution and reciprocity. Consequently, his writings tend to consider the latter forms of integration as discrete, permanent and inherent feature of the former sectors of the economy and their institutions. For example, it leads Hillenkamp et al. (2013: 5) to argue that ‘principles of economic integration (...) generate different types of institutional structures, which can be combined in multiple configurations’, such as those summarised in the following table:

Principle	Reciprocity	Redistribution	Householding	Market
Type of interdependence	Instituted complementarity	Instituted centrality	Varying (instituted complementarity or centrality or other)	Mechanical competition
Type of institutional structure	Horizontal (e.g. symmetric)	Vertical (e.g. hierarchical)	Domestic group, in some cases autarkic	Market system
Logic of action	Obligation among peers	Obligation in a (personal or functional) centralized system	Sharing production and work for satisfying the needs of the group	Bargaining in one's own interest

**TABLE 2: INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES OF THE FORMS OF INTEGRATION, SOURCE
HILLENKAMP ET AL. (2013: 5)**

Complementarily, some authors such as Fiske (1992: 690) have advocated that the four forms¹⁵, through the respective ‘meaningful operations and relations (...) [that] operate when people transfer things (bilateral exchange, contribution, and distribution), (...) are the terms defining the primary standard of social justice’. For the author of the ‘relational models theory’, equality-matching (reciprocity) corresponds to a sense of ‘fairness as strict equality, equal treatment, and balanced reciprocity’. Communal sharing (householding) corresponds to ‘caring kindness, altruism, selfless generosity’ and works under a ‘traditional legitimation in terms of inherent, essential nature or karma of group’. Authority ranking (redistribution) corresponds to an heteronomic and charismatic command and the ‘obedience to [the] will of superiors’. Market pricing corresponds to ‘abstract, universal, rational principles based on the utilitarian criterion of the greatest good for the greatest number (since this calculus require a ratio metric for assessing all costs and benefits)’. It works under a ‘rational-legal legitimation’ (Fiske, 1992: 695). The idea ensued that state and market institutions rely on opposed logical mind-sets of distributive patterns (Polanyi, 1944: 29), but also what resemble principles of fairness.

¹⁵ His forms of socialisation slightly depart from, but greatly echo Polanyi’s forms of integration.

2.1.4. Markets vs. social protection

Polanyi's work was inscribed in a highly political context and debate over the development paradigms of his time. From the 19th century, theorists and politicians had disagreed about the appropriateness of market or state institutions, attributing to them either prospering or damaging effects on society or its development. Institutions were not only associated with diverging principles of integration, but also with different legitimating statements of justice, definitions of poverty, inequalities and how or why they matter. The work of Polanyi has contributed to reifying the association and opposition between market and state, with inherent and diverging principles of distribution and fairness. This interpretation – clearly arguing for the importance of social protection – has validated and helped to entrench the debate on development strategies in an institutional interpretation of social justice.¹⁶

Among other contributions, this interpretation fed controversies about how to eradicate poverty or address inequalities. Moral and political accounts were trapped in an institutional understanding of the merits of the market vs. the state, translated into top-down development policies. Those approaches endorsed competing criteria of fairness (effort, merit, needs, risks...) and diverging moral matters (wellbeing, equity, efficiency, productive incentives...). However, the implementation of institutional principles of social justice did not present great theoretical challenges but consisted only in arguing for the imposition of rules or the respect for an overarching institution (Sullivan, 2003). Subsequently, concerns centred on two main factors: furthering the market's economic

¹⁶ The (dis)continuities between theory, policies, and practice has been the subject of many debates (See for example: Farrelly, 2007; Mason, 2004). I do not argue here that there is a direct link between redistributive paradigms and the implementation of development policies. Social justice debates are only one source of influence in the design of development policies, along with many other matters that are not detailed here.

growth – notably following Kuznets (1955) and Solow's (1956) arguments – and pursuing the redistribution of wealth through the state (eg. Beveridge, 2000). The two perspectives were represented clearly as ideologically opposed positions in the polarisation of the political debate between a right wing – adopting a liberal standpoint – and a left wing – favouring state redistribution.¹⁷ The pursuit of liberal growth mainly goes along with claims of equality of opportunity of chances and the belief in a 'restorative' trickle-down effect¹⁸, while socialist/communist advocacy for a redistributive state intends to assure an equality of outcome. The amalgamation of patterns of exchanges, institutions, theories of justice and political projects underpinned most development approaches over the 20th century.

Lately, such amalgamation has started to be questioned: the combined virtues of market growth and state redistribution have been stressed in a pro-poor growth approach – see for example Bourguignon (2000) and Manning (2007). These debates have questioned again whether market-led growth without redistribution, or redistribution without growth are sufficient to eliminate poverty and reduce inequalities (still mainly understood as a monetary matter), or whether they must be combined to reach the most vulnerable sections of society.

¹⁷ The liberal and neo-liberal approaches to reducing inequalities and furthering growth are seen as 'the two sides of the same coin' (Berg and Ostry, 2011). This is thanks to accrediting a trickle-down effect, transfer of technology, knowledge and the self-regulation of markets. Communist and socialist theories argued for the extension of universal systems of social security and Keynesian economic politics of wage distribution.

¹⁸ The trickle-down may be a 'non-existent theory', since no 'economist, of any school of thought, [has] actually advocated a 'trickle down' theory' (Sowell, 2012: 2, see footnote 2). Yet, by the notion of trickle-down, I refer to the 'widely[-shared] belie[f] that the accumulation of wealth by the rich is good for the poor since some of the increased wealth of the rich trickles down to the poor' (Aghion and Bolton, 1997: 151).

2.1.5. The 'comparative advantage' of the third sector

A Polanyian interpretation reappears today to praise the solidarity or reciprocity associated with the third-sector, which is seen as an alternative to the (failing) market and redistributive institutional approaches, but also to echo new concerns about the empowerment of poor sections of the population. A few academics have clearly re-endorsed a Polanyian approach to understand either the nature of the third-sector exchanges, or the resistance and protection the sector offers against the impact of neoliberalism.

On the one hand, forms of integration are used once more to conceptualise the divide and logics of exchange occurring between state, market and initiatives of the third-sector or its subfields. Servet (2007) argues that the concepts of reciprocity and redistribution are particularly helpful for understanding the internal organisation of the solidarity economy. Yet, Lemaître and Helmsing (2012: 760) use those concepts to question their institutional boundaries since 'the basis, the practices of [Brazil third-sector] grassroots initiatives, appears in fact to be more heterogeneous than that which has been presented by the political discourse'. The authors nonetheless do not interrogate Polanyian assumptions. Rather they note the varying influence of their market-drivenness over their practice of reciprocity and solidarity.

On the other hand, authors such as Levien and Paret (2012) analyse Polanyi's interpretation of the double movement of resistance to neoliberalism and the market's social damages, as now played by the third-sector. These authors illustrate the tendency not only to re-endorse a flawed cleavage between economic sectors, but also an understanding of their nature and role for development. Yet, 'for many concerned with development', it grounds a vision of 'the third-sector [as] a source of optimism, promising the 'room for manoeuvre' in development intervention...' (Hulme, 1994: 251). Polanyi's approach also finds an echo in Moulaert and Ailenei's (2005: 2038) conception of the resurgence of the

‘third-sector’ – from Byzantium to today, in Europe, Muslim countries, India, Africa and America. They understand that it has conveyed ‘new social forces [which] develop and give rise to alternative institutions and mechanisms of solidarity and redistribution (...) when the economic growth engine starts to stutter, [and] formal distribution mechanisms begin to fail’. They therefore see the third-sector ‘as a means of addressing the failures of the institutions of the socioeconomic movements to guarantee solidarity among economic agents’.

Polanyi’s legacy therefore represents not only a controversial understanding of the forms of exchange but also of the unfair nature of institutions and of sectors of the economy which has framed projects of development and struggles against poverty and inequalities. Questioning the relationship between institutions, sectors of the economy, patterns of exchange and principles of fairness is of actual importance, since Polanyi’s weak understanding deeply affects paradigms and practices of development. The Polanyian approach will benefit from resituating the Polanyian concern about exchanges and their impacts on development, in contemporary concerns for the fight against poverty and inequalities. Sen’s pursuit of the expansion of one’s set of capabilities as a central project of development, addresses Polanyi’s lack of evaluative framework and resituates his perspective as a concern for social justice.¹⁹ In addition, it refocuses on individuals, and is of particular interest for moving away from institutional criteria and theories of justice.

¹⁹ On affinities between Polanyi’s and Sen’s approaches, see Scott (2012).

2.2. The capability approach as a new evaluative framework

In its modern revival²⁰, during the rise of ‘Westphalian sovereignty’ (Jost and Kay, 2010), distributive justice was understood particularly through the concept of social contract. It focused on resolving ‘how social arrangements should be made and what social institutions should be chosen, and through that, about what social realizations would come about’ (Sen, 2010: 15). The suitability of relying on the state and/or the market in order to achieve such a distributive project, corresponded to different claims for equality (as an outcome of redistribution from the market or the state) or equity (as a fair treatment), and according to different criteria of justice (e.g. effort, merit, needs, risks) or moral matters (e.g. wellbeing, efficiency, productive incentives). Amartya Sen is today the most influential contemporary social justice thinker. His approach²¹ aims to introduce a shift from this institutional arrangement-focused tradition, arguing for the comprehensive account of justice realisation through capabilities, as a renewed account of people’s advantages. However, Sen does not provide a theory of justice, but an informative framework to identify capability gaps.

²⁰ Social justice debates have not always been dominant in social theories; they only became a central concern from the late 17th century (Jackson, 2005). Since 1950, associated with social justice preoccupations, the eradication of poverty has returned to the development agenda. It came in a certain rupture from previous approaches of justice. For example, Plato’s commutative justice was concerned with the reciprocal treatment of people within their daily transactions, without criticising the social order nor aiming to modify it (Lennig, 2011). Aristotle introduced later the search for equal treatment through what he called ‘corrective justice’, through which this individual relation could be corrected (Jost and Kay, 2010; Lennig, 2011).

²¹ Sen and Nussbaum have led the development of the CA, along with the numerous contributions of academics from diverse fields. This thesis focuses mainly on the approach developed by Sen.

2.2.1. A realisation-focused account of justice

Sen distances his position from earlier theorists of distributive justice and particularly that of Rawls'²², asserting that 'we have to seek institutions that *promote* justice, rather than treating the institutions as themselves manifestations of justice, which would reflect a kind of institutionally fundamentalist view' (2009: 82). For Sen, accepting earlier institutional answers will end the search for fairness and justice (2009: 88). However, Sen would agree that social justice has to be what Miller describes as '...a critical idea, one that challenges us to reform our institutions and practices in the name of greater fairness' (Miller, 1999: x in Jost and Kay, 2010: 1129). He rejects the priority of chosen institutions over the nature of realisations in the account of justice. For Sen, if 'the institutions themselves can sensibly count as *part* of the realizations that come through them', then it is essential to focus on 'what social realisations are actually generated through that institutional base' (2010: 82). Therefore, Sen justifies his focus on the state of human capabilities and agency as providing more comprehensive information on poverty and inequalities, seen as the outcomes rather than the fair design of institutions. He thus distinguishes the arrangement-focused from the realisation-focused assessment, and stands for the latter. Sen's approach makes way for fact-sensitive information (Farrelly, 2007). As an explicit example, he explains that, in the law of nature, big fishes freely devour small fishes: if this may well correspond to 'organisational propriety and behavioural correctness' of established organisations, it will certainly interrogate the 'comprehensive concept of realised justice' (2010: 20). Sen denounced previous institutionalist approaches that, having failed to have any corrective approach, disregarded the adverse effects of institutions on people (2010: 90). Moreover, since 'human lives [are of central

²² Sen's work on social justice comes especially as a critique of Rawlsian theory of justice, despite the high recognition of his intellectual indebtedness and admiration for his work.

importance], experiences and realizations cannot be supplanted by information about institutions that exist and the rules that operate' (2010: 18). Therefore, Sen's CA aims to re-focus on human agency for development as opposed to an institutional top-down account of justice.²³

2.2.2. Capability as a matter of justice

To offer a comprehensive realisation-focused approach of justice, Sen offers a theory focused on people's capabilities. One's wellbeing should not only be assessed through one's resources or realized achievements, but also should mirror one's capabilities: peoples' real 'ability to achieve', as the freedom to choose functionings from a set of alternatives. Sen's CA represents a new evaluative framework that has revolutionised previous accounts of social justice. It departs from various evaluative spaces for assessing justice. The latter have

often (...) rely[ed] on the concepts of personal advantage or wellbeing (hedonic or eudaimonic) (...). The metrics most commonly suggested are resources (for example, Dworkin (1981) or preference fulfilment, Rawls' account of primary goods, opportunities (for welfare; for example, Arneson (1989) or basic rights such as the human rights approach Donnelly (2003)).

(Gutwalda et al., 2014: 360)

Firstly, the CA departs from approaches focused on the distribution of resources and the income-led definition of poverty. Sen argues that 'the fit between a person's holding of primary goods²⁴ and the substantive freedoms that the person can in fact enjoy can be really imperfect' (Sen, 2010: 64). Moreover, he sees the distribution of primary goods as

²³ The CA echoes and feeds the new paradigm of development emphasising the need for bottom-up approaches (Birchall, 2003).

²⁴ 'Primary goods' constitutes for Rawls the elements that would ensure citizens' full cooperation and free participation in their society.

‘objects of convenience’ and ‘all-purpose means’ as important only for the ‘sake of something else’, i.e. people’s self-fulfilment (Sen, 2010: 265).

Secondly, Sen prefers to focus on the quality of life and ‘wellbeing’, although he argues that one’s self-assessment of wellbeing may not objectively illustrate the advantage someone has in comparison to others, whose higher levels of contentment correspond to wider opportunities and freedom to choose. In the CA, Sen points to people’s self-expectations as a limit to the association of social justice with concerns for one’s welfare. The concept of ‘adaptive preferences’ describes how people may lower their habits and self-expectations because of their social or cultural context:

Deprived people tend to come to terms with their deprivation because of the sheer necessity of survival, and they may, as a result, lack the courage to demand any radical change, and may even adjust their desires and expectations to what they unambitiously see as feasible.

(Sen, 1999: 63)

The concept of adaptive preferences helps to distinguish people feeling fulfilled with a low level of functionings and freedom – e.g. women, poor people – from those who do not feel fulfilled despite of a high level of functionings. Individual preferences and expectations mirror the milieu in which people exert their freedom, which may be ‘limited by the social and economic distribution of opportunity and political prohibition’ (Bridges, 2006: 20). Traditional norms and rules may be responsible for ‘the lack of perception of [one’s] personal interest’ (Sen, 1990: 126) and affects one’s desires as well as one’s satisfaction.

Sen maintains that capabilities are a more objective metric of justice than the subjective assessment of wellbeing, because they bypass the bias played by adaptive preferences on subjective expectations. Consequently,

the use of functionings and capabilities (...) as a broader informational space for evaluating wellbeing and quality-of-life is based on a critique of Utilitarianism and its alleged insensitivity to the problem of adaptive preferences. (...) [O]ne might thus expect that *prima facie*, human wellbeing

assessments should discard any use of subjective information. An evaluation of individuals' wellbeing in terms of their functionings and capabilities would be able to avoid subjective misrepresentation of objective circumstances.

(Teschl and Comim, 2005: 230)

Sen, reinterpreting the utilitarian view of individual satisfaction (Lennig, 2011), focuses on actual opportunities as the aim of a good life. He argues that the focus on one's ability to achieve helps to address the divide between his/her levels of contentment and objective wellbeing.

2.2.3. Means, capabilities and functionings

Sen distinguishes between means, functionings and capabilities. Those are differences between resources, outcomes and opportunities in terms of individual freedom: means of freedom, command over freedom and extent of freedom (Sen, 1992a):

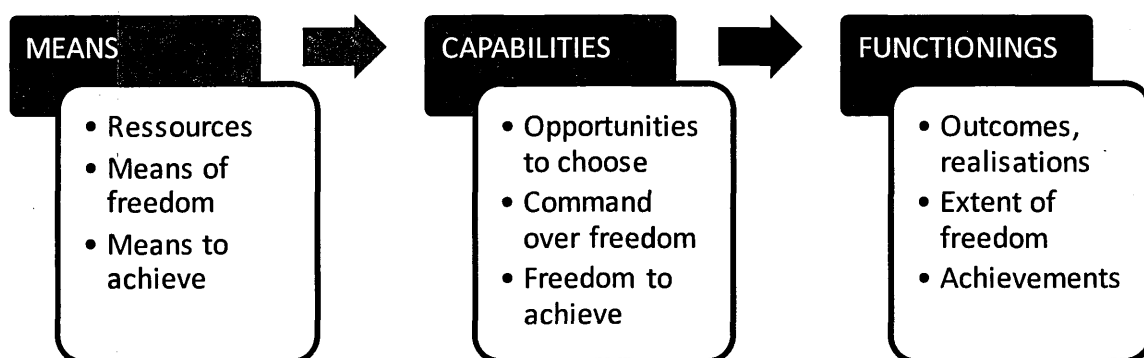


FIGURE 2: DISTINCTIVE CONCEPTS OF MEANS, CAPABILITIES AND FUNCTIONINGS IN SEN

Sen emphasizes the distinction between functionings and capabilities: wellbeing should mirror not only realized achievements, but also the real 'ability to achieve' as the freedom to choose functionings from a set of alternatives. By mirroring opportunities and freedom to choose (2010: 238), the CA aims to be a broader informational base rather than one valuing only the combination of functionings (2010: 236).

Sen's concept of capability comes then as a specific and twofold concept of freedom:

(i) The opportunity aspect of freedom is concerned with people's substantive opportunities to achieve. This aspect reflects (i/a) the opportunity to achieve, and (i/b) the enhancement of future options. Capabilities are 'an aspect of freedom, concentrating in particular on substantive opportunities' (2010: 287).

(ii) The process aspect of freedom evaluates the 'levers of control in one's own hands' (Sen, 1993: 522). In term of capability, it corresponds to the ability to control the context in which one can develop capabilities s/he values. The process aspect of freedom must note the range of opportunities offered and the freedom of person's decision through: (ii/a) the scope for autonomy in individual choices, (ii/b) immunity from inference by others (Sen, 1993). 'The capability to influence an outcome in the direction one wants [is effectively] (...) an important part of freedom' (Sen, 2010: 309). It accounts for a direct command over freedom rather than an indirect effective power.

Freedom is effectively dual: it is an *opportunity* and a *process*. Freedom widens or curtails the '*opportunity* to pursue our objective', but also offers 'the *process* of choice itself': the possibility one has to decide for himself/herself (Sen, 2010: 228). Sen clearly distinguishes those two aspects in his account, relying on the two Indian concepts of Niti ('organisational propriety and behavioural correctness) and Naya (realisation, accomplishment-focused account of justice). The evaluation of 'comprehensive outcomes' has to assess '*the way* the person reaches the culmination situation (for example, whether through his own choice or through the dictate of the others)', along with the choices made (2010: 230). Particular attention to 'comprehensive outcomes' must then record 'actions undertaken, agencies involved, processes used, etc., along with the simple outcomes seen in a way that is detached from processes, agencies and relations' (2010: 215-6).

Sen is therefore arguing for a freedom-based evaluative and empowering system. The CA defines poverty as '*an impediment to capability achievement*' associated with individuals' '*deprivation*' in choosing their way of life (2010: 254). Deprivation relates to

capabilities rather than to resources, highlighting the importance of opportunities and abilities as a freedom of choice. Thinking in terms of capability means then considering what people have, but also what people do and are, in contrast with what they may value having, doing or being. Sen claims that ‘real poverty (in term of capability deprivation) can be much more intense than we can deduce from income data’ (2010: 256), which implies that poverty is multi-dimensional.

Therefore, the CA offers a new (evaluative and informative) framework for understanding the developmental outcome of the different forms of exchange. Weighing up the capabilities that exchanges mediate allows understanding not only of one’s opportunities to pursue his/her objectives, but also of the hindrances to achievement that they may represent. However, the implementation of such a framework poses problems: it is a fragile paradigm of justice to implement and it introduces a weak account of the social dynamics shaping poverty and inequalities.

2.3. A strong idea of justice but weak paradigm of development

The capability approach has mainly been considered as an ethical contribution and compared to theories of social justice. Sen’s CA effectively supports the extension of particular aspects of people’s capabilities and the removal of institutional injustice, and claims that deliberative and participative principles matter for being truthful to what people value. Yet such an approach may appear to some scholars to be problematical since it is an ethical contribution that does not aim to be a theory of justice. This section illustrates how Sen’s guidance for the implementation of his framework fails to indicate the extent to which the focus on capabilities ought to be a project of development, or the role that institutions and agents themselves play for expanding people’s sets of capabilities. It illustrates that Sen’s contribution should be understood as an ontological rather than an

ethical exercise (Martins: 2006,2007), and that the former constitutes the strength and at the same time the limit of his approach.

2.3.1. An idea of justice

According to Gutwalda et al. (2014: 360) a constructivist theory of justice to be complete not only contains a ‘metric of justice’ (Robeyns, 2009) or the ‘currency of justice’ (Cohen, 1989) – i.e. ‘an evaluative space for assessing justice – but should also provide three further elements. Firstly, theory relies on ‘principles of justice’ or ‘patterns of justice’ (Page, 2007), i.e. ‘the selection of an appropriate distributive aim and respective principles such as equality, priority or sufficiency’ (Gutwalda et al., 2014: 360). Secondly, principles of justice set a scope: a unit to which they have to apply, or their global or fully universal scope. Thirdly, they are grounded on ‘basic standards and principles’, ‘based on philosophical models or arguments’ (Gutwalda et al., 2014: 357) - i.e. epistemological and ontological conceptions. In this regard, the CA does not represent a complete theory of justice, but only ‘an idea of justice’. As Nussbaum (2003: 36) notes:

Sen never says to what extent equality of capability ought to be a social goal, or how it ought to be combined with other political values in the pursuit of social justice. Thus, the connection of his equality arguments with a theory of justice remains as yet unclear.

The CA introduces a metric of justice: Sen clearly states that the concept of capability enables us to measure individual advantage. However, he avoids offering principles of justice, such as Dworkin’s (2000) general egalitarian principles or Rawls’ (1999) principles of distribution. In fact, Sen objects to constructivist egalitarian principles. He neither concurs with an ‘equality of achievement’ equivalent to an ‘equality of welfare’ (2010: 265), nor supports an ‘equality of capabilities’ (2010: 295) although he maintains that no one should go below a threshold of capability deprivation. If we can attach importance to ‘equality of capabilities’, he argues that it will be impossible to demand it.

Rather than ‘achiev[ing] – or dreaming about achieving – some perfectly just society or social arrangements’ (2010: 21), Sen re-enacts the comparative approach of justice initiated by Adam Smith (2002). He regards justice as an unattainable ideal that should only drive the assessment of the reality. In his departure from institutionalist approaches, Sen refuses to argue about ‘how to advance justice’, but rather contributes to ‘how to identify injustice to remove it’ (Sen and Sennett, 2009). He understands the fight against inequalities and the empowerment of people through widening people’s opportunity and process aspects of freedom. For advancing social justice, Sen however advocates for the ‘general advancement of the capabilities of all’, the ‘reduction of capability inequalities’ (2010: 298) or the ‘elimination of unambiguous inequalities in capabilities’ (Sen, 1992b: 7). Sen’s CA proposes an understanding of empowerment as the process of expanding an individual’s wellbeing freedom, or set of valuable capabilities (Keleher, 2014). ‘Expansion of freedom is viewed, in this approach, both as the primary end and as the principal means of development’ (Sen, 1999: xii).

It leads Gutwalda et al. (2014: 360) to argue that ‘it is unclear whether the CA provides a fully-fledged justification’ to his approach of social justice. Sen effectively does not provide impartial principles equivalent to Rawls’ original position, and which the veil of ignorance assures. However, a universal scope and ‘cosmopolitan’ perspective of the CA is clearly stated in Sen’s praise of two elements that he thought to advance justice, that is expanding human capabilities as freedom. Effectively, Sen believes that furthering freedom as development may happen firstly through deliberative and participative processes, and secondly, through the removal of institutional injustice. To achieve this, he believes in the ‘critical agency’ of the public. Moreover, following Smith’s ‘impartial spectator’, Sen argues that when discussing justice’s principles and achievements we must

take into account inner as well as distant voices through the ‘eyes of mankind’ (2010: 130).²⁵

‘In The Idea of Justice, Sen [effectively] refers to Adam Smith’s model of an impartial spectator (Sen 2010). He also introduces the idea of participation and public reason to substantiate the selection of relevant capabilities for certain societies. However, it remains unclear which of these grounding mechanisms Sen uses as the main means of grounding principles [of his approach of justice]. In addition, he fails to state the concrete principles themselves as well as the means to reach a solution in critical problems of distribution; for example, how to distribute the selected capabilities.’

(Gutwalda et al., 2014: 360)

2.3.2. Development as freedom²⁶

In parallel, the extension of people’s capabilities that Sen values, corresponds to a particular aspect of the process of freedom one may experience. If it introduces a discussion about the ideal state of development as a freedom to achieve what constitutes one’s wellbeing only, it also leads to disregarding people’s agency in the process of their empowerment.

On the one hand, Sen defines the notion of freedom through a complex distinction and interconnection between agency and wellbeing – and as a parallel to the concept of achievement.

²⁵ This is in contrast to Rawls’s ‘veil of ignorance’, which impartiality restrains the group from engaging in the choice of the ‘original position’. It also inscribes the CA in a cosmopolitan account of justice beyond the frontier of states.

²⁶ This section, along with section 2.4, p.57, have been presented as elements of Conference papers at ‘The Ethics of poverty alleviation’ conference held by the University of Salzburg (Austria) in August 2014, and at the 2015 HDCA conference hosted by Georgetown University in Washington in September 2015.

	Agency	Well-Being
Achievement	<i>Agency Achievement</i> – the realization of goals and values a person chooses and has reason to pursue.	<i>Well-Being Achievement</i> (Functionings) - the quality of the life an individual is living based on the interrelated beings and doings she realizes.
Freedom	<i>Agency Freedom</i> – the freedom to choose and bring about the achievements one has reason to value.	<i>Well-Being Freedom</i> (Capabilities) - the freedom to achieve the beings and doings that are constitutive of one's well-being.

TABLE 3 : SEN’S DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN AGENCY AND WELL-BEING, FREEDOM AND ACHIEVEMENT, SOURCE KELEHER (2014: 56)

Sen re-introduces the notion of wellbeing to illustrate how freedoms can vary in their comprehensive outcome, and to initiate a reflection on which levels of agency/freedom matter when considering one’s empowerment.

A person’s capability set corresponds to one’s ‘wellbeing freedom’: the ‘freedom to achieve those things that are constitutive of one’s wellbeing’ (Sen, 1992b: 57). Sen reckons that agency freedom – i.e. ‘the achievements one values and which one attempts to produce’ (Sen, 1992b: 57) – could encompass a greater account of one’s goals and values – i.e. the ‘aspects of states of affairs that relate to one’s agency objective (whether or not they directly contribute to one’s wellbeing)’ (Sen, 1992b: 57). Yet, Sen’s association of one’s enhanced capability with the wellbeing freedom more likely illustrates an improved realisation of one’s set of capabilities. This is because, he says, agency freedom is inconsistent in relation to one’s ends:

There would be nothing contrary in the fact that an enhancement of agency freedom (i.e. an increase in one’s ability to promote goals that one has reasons to promote) can lead to a reduction of wellbeing freedom (and correspondingly to a decline in achieved wellbeing). Indeed, it is precisely because of such conflicts that the distinction between agency and wellbeing is important.

For example, if instead of being far away from a scene of crime – a crime that I would like to prevent – I happen to be bang on the spot, my agency freedom is certainly enhanced (I can now do something to stop that terrible event which I would much like to prevent), but as a result my wellbeing may go-down (e.g. I may get wounded in the process of prevention even if my efforts are successful).

(Sen, 1992b: 60)

Sen values one’s freedom to a positive realization (wellbeing freedom) rather than the freedom to achieve what one values independently of the consequences (agency freedom). As Chandler (2013: 11) puts it:

For Sen, the individual is the only agent of development but the individual is a vulnerable subject needing the enabling or empowering of external agency: the individual is thereby both the ends and the means of ‘development as freedom’.

On the other hand, Sen’s discussion of the difference between having one’s objectives realized and participating in the realization of one’s objectives (Sen, 1992b: 56-8) introduces an important point about the involvement of individuals in the freedom which they value. He uses the concepts of ‘control freedom’, ‘instrumental agency success’, ‘effective freedom’ and ‘realized agency success’. These concepts explain the degree to which opportunity freedom extends beyond one’s direct control.

Agency Concept	Example
Control Freedom	I want peace in country A. I personally negotiate a cease-fire and ensure that it takes place.
Instrumental Agency Success	I want peace in country A. I play some role in securing peace. For example, I start a campaign for peace, actively lobby politicians to work for peace, and so forth.
Effective Freedom	I want peace in country A and because my representatives are aware that (I and others like me) want peace, a peace pact is negotiated and implemented. (Note: My will does not have to be the <i>only</i> motivating factor for peace, but it must be one of the motivating factors).
Realized Agency Success	I want peace in country A. Peace takes hold in country A irrespective of any role I have in bringing about peace.

TABLE 4: SEN’S AGENCY CONCEPT, SOURCE KELEHER (2014: 60)

For Sen, many freedoms take the form of our ability to get what we value and want, without us being able to operate directly the levers of control, or to have weight in the account of their ‘counterfactual decisions’ – what one would choose. Control and account of ‘counterfactual decisions’ gives us more power and more freedom to lead the lives that we would choose to lead (Sen, 1992b: 64).

Therefore, Sen decides not to account for people’s control over the realization of their objectives. According to Sen (1992b: 64) – and reinforced by many (Keleher, 2014) –

while control freedom may form a valuable empowerment, this is not necessarily empowering and improving one's freedom and wellbeing:

Many freedoms take the form of our ability to get what we value and want, without the levers of control being *directly* operated by us. The controls are exercised in line with what we value and want (i.e. in line with our 'counterfactual decisions' – what we *would* choose), and in this sense they give us more power and more freedom to lead the lives that we would choose to lead.

Exercising control freedom 'may be the result of misspecifying freedom by overlooking the loss of [the] option of leading a peaceful and unbothered life' (Sen, 1992b: 63). To put it another way, for Sen, what matters is the fact that people have effective opportunities (hence opportunity aspect of freedom) rather than the effective control over opportunities.

Defining capabilities as a matter of wellbeing freedom (to achieve only what constitute one's wellbeing) and of realised agency (the freedom of being able to be and do what one values irrespective of his/her action), Sen tends to discredit people's power over the realisation of their wellbeing and disregard their control over their realisation. Yet, he affirms that the adoption of the CA as an evaluative framework should encapsulate the processes through which individuals may exert their freedom to be and do what they value. Yet, Sen advocates re-centring the debate of social justice on people's freedom to act and achieve a valued form of wellbeing, rather than on their direct agency.

2.3.3. Deliberative and participative processes

To promote freedom as people-centred and realisation-focused end of development, Sen (1999: 38) put a particular emphasis on the importance of

the following type of instrumental freedoms: (1) political freedoms, (2) economic facilities, (3) social opportunities, (4) transparency guarantees, and (5) protective security. These institutional freedoms tend to contribute to the general capability of a person to live more freely, but they also serve to complement one another.

Beyond those instrumental freedoms, Drèze and Sen (2013: 232) argue that freedom ‘must (...) include the freedom to think freely, without being severely restrained by pressured conformism, or by ignorance of how prevailing practices in the rest of the world differ from what can be locally observed’. Those (not exhaustible) freedoms enable further freedoms and are thus not only the ends, but also the principal means of development.

In practice, Sen argues that the demand of justice has to give primacy to the removal or prevention of manifest institutional injustice in the world. This passes through an ongoing assessment and search for fairness and justice in a comprehensive way. To enhance capabilities, or wellbeing freedom, ‘[i]ndividuals have to be freed from ‘unfreedoms’, which can take both material and immaterial or ideological forms’ (Chandler, 2013: 15). Kitson et al. (2000: 631) translates this approach as ‘requir[ing] the removal of the obstacles that inhibit individuals and groups from developing their potential and from deploying their resources to full advantage’, as opposed to the orthodox economic theory for which ‘resources endowment of individuals are taken as given’.

Consequently, institutions and development policies should be constantly assessed and modified in function of the (wellbeing and agency) freedoms that they may curtail. Regarding the relations between the market, the state and institutional justice, Drèze and Sen (2013) declare:

‘it is not that markets inevitably fail and hamper human development; it is merely that they have failed to deliver adequate education, healthcare and other vital services in the Indian context. [However,] there is reason to believe that the expansion of welfare programmes can do better’

They express scepticism regarding the fair outcome that those institutions may bring. By contrast, Sen believes that the denunciation and resolution of relative injustices of processes should be adopted thanks to deliberative and participative processes. He associates this approach with the general idea of democracy, which a perpetual debate on inequalities should further. Sen values the role of ‘critical agency’ of an aggregate of individuals in order to assess and reject constraints on their capabilities (Bowman, 2010:

5). The CA therefore considers people as active agents in the process of change and focuses on their prominent role. Yet, such an approach, which seems to fall under some common sense, falls short in providing satisfying guidelines.

However, Sen defends the maintenance of a certain degree of incompleteness in his approach, in order to enable further debate and the expression of diverse human ends and ethical motivations in the choices of functionings. Sen's agenda, refocusing the attention on the agents, led him to avoid creating principles of justice that could clearly assure them with a control over their freedom (the process aspect of capabilities). Yet, he however disregards social change, as an unclear outcome of deliberative and participative processes, individual or groups' 'critical agency', to be an end of development. Another concern is how they could guarantee the removal of injustices or the acquisition of further freedoms. Moreover, even in democratic and participative settings, and 'given the rich array of functionings that Sen takes to be relevant, given the extent of disagreement among reasonable people about the nature of the good life, and given the unresolved problem of how to value [different] sets [of capabilities], it is natural to ask how far Sen's framework is operational' (Sugden, 1993: 1953).

The CA sustains a high level of abstraction in its claims to promote individuals' freedom and remove relative obstacles. As Sen (2009: 232) himself acknowledged, '[the] capability perspective does point to the central relevance of the inequalities of capabilities in the assessment of social disparities, but it does not, on its own, propose any specific formula for policy decisions'. Therefore, 'the transformative project of development is reduced down to that of enlarging individual agency understood as choice-making capacity. Freedom now becomes an internal process of empowerment, one with no fixed measure of comparison and no fixed end or goal' (Chandler, 2013: 15). For Nussbaum it represents a 'reluctance to make commitment about substance (which capabilities a society ought most centrally to pursue), even that guidance remains but an outline' (Nussbaum,

2006: 50). Consequently, the CA framework is implemented with difficulty. Deneulin (2008b: 1) states that ‘the question of how to ‘operationalize’ the CA, how to put its insights into practice, remains at the core of the approach.’²⁷

However, this thesis remains concerned with development as a surreptitious and ongoing process of change through which we may aim at promoting dynamics of empowerment along with tackling capabilities deprivation and the reproduction of unequal capabilities in the society. Understanding the role of exchanges in these processes should contribute to such an endeavour.

2.3.4. An ontological understanding of Sen’s contribution

Instead of considering Sen’s CA as an ethical theory, Martins (2006, 2007) has demonstrated that Sen’s ethical revolution is mainly the fruit of an ontological exercise, which we should consider as his main legacy. Martins effectively reminds us of the difference between ontological, ethical and scientific queries (and their interactions)²⁸ in order to discuss the particular contribution(s) of Sen’s CA. The author effectively illustrates that Sen is mainly concerned with descriptive questions: *What is the nature of one’s advantage or well-being?* or *What are capabilities?* Martins argues Sen’s answers to these specific questions constitute his main contribution, which is of an ontological nature.

Martins explains that we should not confuse Sen’s real contribution: the ontological description of categories, which should guide our evaluation of justice, with the context in

²⁷ This chapter exclusively focuses on the difficulty in implementing the CA as a paradigm of development to guide development policies. Difficulties experienced in the transcribing of the approach into methods and methodology for empirical research will be explored in section 4.1.1, p.119.

²⁸ Ontology poses questions of the form ‘what is the nature of this entity?’. Ethics poses questions such as ‘why something and what should be done?’. Scientific enquiry aims to answer to question ‘how could we make sense of the causal mechanisms or structures of the facts observed empirically?’ (Martins, 2007: 42).

which Sen defends his approach. If we accept that Sen is mainly developing an ontology of the notion of well-being and capabilities, such exercise is effectively legitimated through an engagement in ethical debate around the question: ‘what best illustrates one’s advantage and relative well-being?’. He therefore dialogues with previous social justice theories over the question ‘why preferring such currency of justice over another?’, ‘by means of an ontological exercise, and not through ethical theorising’ (Martins, 2006: 675). Therefore, Sen’s ontological project aims at elaborating a concept that can engage with a critique and a specification of the underpinning ontological categories (such as freedom, wellbeing, etc.) used by previous social justice theorists but also welfare economists, in a reflection on the ontological gaps and ethical values of those diverse concepts.

Since Sen is not concerned with the question ‘what should be done?’ but positions his critique at an ontological level which refutes any institutional and universalist approach, we should not consider his work to be a theory of justice. Martins (2007: 37) thinks that ‘much of the persuasiveness of Sen’s arguments spring from this (not explicitly acknowledged) ontological dimension’, in rupture with previous social justice and welfare economic approaches. Effectively, ‘the philosophical and methodological underpinnings of Sen’s approach are radically different from those of contemporary welfare economics and mainstream economic practice’ (Martins, 2006: 671). The strength of his approach is to illustrate the relativeness and pertinence of his clarified concept of advantage.

Moreover, Martins (2006: 676) argues that Sen’s concept of capabilities can only refer to a vision of reality as an open and dynamic system, that is to say a system in which capabilities ‘may or may not be actualised in different circumstances’ (2006: 678). He concludes that the approach can be fruitfully interpreted as an ontology of ‘causal powers’, which implies and is concerned with the specific causal mechanisms which determine important components of capabilities (e.g. freedom, functionings, power, choices) and people’s capabilities (Martins, 2006: 674). As Martins (2007: 42) explains, in considering

advantages as options, potential and opportunities, Sen's CA 'meta-theoretical assumptions' (Smith and Seward, 2009:214) offer an understanding of the dynamic side of social inequalities. I argue that the CA therefore appeals to a scientific question: 'how can people really have the opportunity to be and do what they value?'. Sen's concern for the irregularities that exist between people's opportunities are naturally feeding both a scientific concern for the study of the underlying causal powers, and an ethical concern for acknowledging such social dynamics and for fighting against inequalities. The CA has the strength to give moral importance to a comprehensive appraisal of a person's advantage by revisiting key concepts such as (positive) freedom, (complex) choice, (multiple) rationalit(ies) in an interconnected reality. It gives legitimacy to embracing sociological knowledge about (if not developing a new awareness of) the (re)production of social advantages and inequalities. However, I can only agree with the author that the CA 'is not aimed [yet] at understanding specific causal mechanisms through which human advantage and well-being can be fostered' (2007:42).

Therefore, 'the capability approach [can be seen as only] intended to provide an informational basis for assessing equality [: a] good ontological descriptions of well-being and advantage, in order then to evaluate equality' (Martins, 2007: 43). Yet, through bringing a conceptual innovation which discusses conceptions of justice, the CA both revolutionize previous way to tackle the matter at an ethical level, but also 'the ground for substantive theorizing to proceed' (Martins, 2007: 37), notably through methodological underpinnings.

2.4. Individual capabilities and their context

Sen's ethical arguments for the implementation of his framework do not aim to provide a clear guidance about how to directly improve or influence the level of the agents'

capabilities. For most critics, and despite Sen’s account of contextual constraints over the freedom to achieve and over realisations, this corresponds to a gap to offer a comprehensive list of the social factors that constrain people’s capabilities and groups capabilities. In conformity to Sen’s relational interpretation of the capability approach, such as demonstrated by Martins (2006, 2007) and Smith and Seward (2009), the critics have contributed to discussing social and cultural contingencies, along with groups’ capabilities.

2.4.1. Conversion factors and constrained choices

As argued earlier, the CA opens up as a sphere of understanding of social constraints over people’s freedom. We cannot deny that ‘the differences that most interest Sen are social, and connected with entrenched discrimination of various types’ (Nussbaum, 2003: 35). Sen’s writings regularly underline the structure of social inequalities and the outcomes of social discriminations (such as gender and race). Sen (1997: 159) equally argues that:

If we are really concerned with inequalities that matter, we have to take an interest in disparities in political and social position, in addition to other aspects of inequalities, of which income distribution is a part.

Throughout Sen’s (1999) book, Smith and Seward have registered five sources of variations:

Sources of variation	Causal descriptions
Personal heterogeneities	"Physical characteristics that <i>make needs diverse ...</i> "
Environmental diversities	"Environmental conditions that <i>influence what a person gets out of a given level of income ...</i> "
Variations in social climate	"Conversion of income is also <i>influenced by social condittons ...</i> "
Differences in relational perspective	"For example, being relatively poor in a rich community can <i>prevent a person from achieving some elementary 'functionings' ...</i> "
Distributions within the family	"Distributional rules followed within the family can <i>make a major difference</i> to the attainments and predicaments"

All quotes from Sen (1999).

TABLE 5 : SEN’S FIVE SOURCES OF VARIATION BETWEEN RESOURCES, CAPABILITIES AND FUNCTIONNINGS
(SOURCE SMITH AND SEWARD, 2009: 217)

Sen’s framework includes an account of social influences on people’s capability at two different levels: in the transformation from resources into capabilities, and of capabilities into functionings.

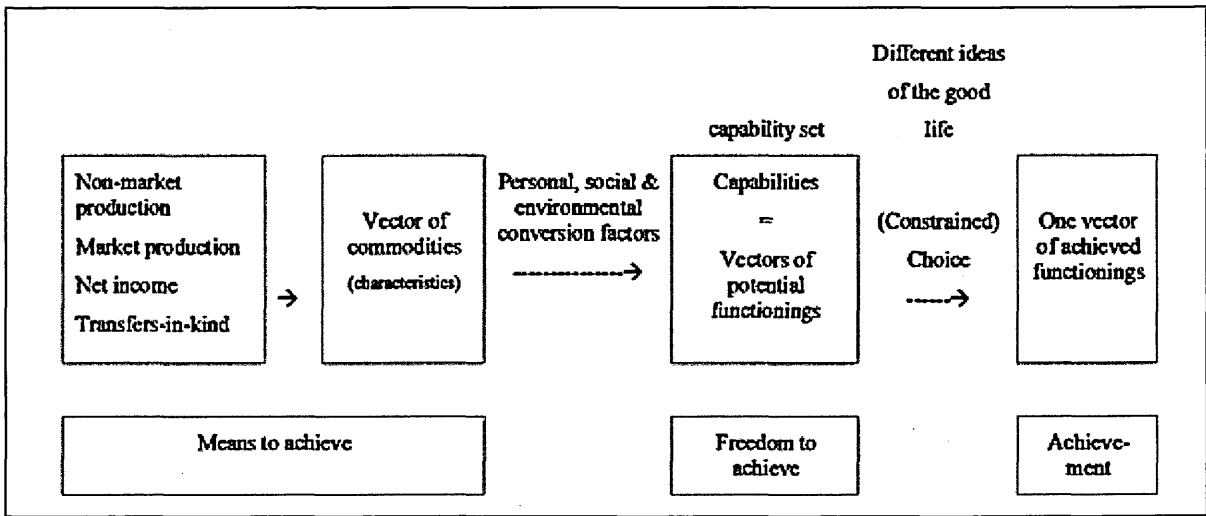


FIGURE 3: THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE CA AND THE DIFFERENT SPACES OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCE, SOURCE ROBEYNS (2003A)

Firstly, social influences affect individuals’ capability to make the most of their resources.

Individual situations mirror the

different opportunities [people have] for converting income and other primary goods into characteristics of good living and into the kind of freedom valued in human life. Thus the relationship between resources and poverty is both variable and deeply contingent on the characteristics of the respective people and the environment in which they live – both natural and social.

(Sen, 2010: 254)

In the transformation of resources into capabilities, Sen vaguely gives importance to external and structural influence on capabilities through the notion of ‘contingencies’: personal heterogeneities, physical environment, social climate, established patterns of behaviours in a community (Sen, 2010: 255).

Secondly, between capabilities and functionings, Sen acknowledges the socially constructed nature or value of choices of a set of functionings. Consequently, it is claimed that ‘societal structures and constraints ... [can be detected] by theoretically distinguishing

functionings from capabilities’ (Robeyns, 2003a: 45). However, Sen considers that if a choice is not restrained by conversion ‘contingencies’, the variety of social choice is a positive element for freedom that must be relayed by deliberative processes. Nonetheless, despite the claim for group self-determination and democratic processes, social factors and ‘groups receive relatively little attention, although it is accepted that they may be instrumentally important for enlarging individual capabilities’ (Stewart, 2004: 1).

2.4.2. Identifying contingencies

Most authors acknowledge the strength of the concept of capability in accounts of discriminations and powers (for example Bowman, 2010; Robeyns, 2003a; Stewart, 2004). Yet, it has been agreed that the CA ‘overlooks the role of culture in shaping the choices that men and women make and perceive as possible or reasonable’ (Bowman, 2010: 3). While the CA emphasizes the need to contextualize the notion of freedom into cultural and social particularities, numerous authors have embraced the project of identifying the complex cultural and social influences over means, and the command over and extent of freedom. They have accounted for ‘the influence of societal structures and constraints on [individual] choices’ and aimed to ‘recognis(e) the social and environmental factors which influence the conversions of commodities into functionings’ (Robeyns, 2003a: 45).

Such studies have thus contributed to the CA, highlighting differentials of level of capabilities and distortion in preferences resulting from unjust backgrounds. They particularly shed light on the conditions of women, people with disabilities, and ethnic groups. Summarizing the extent of those contributions, Robeyns (2005: 7) argues the following:

The social conversion factors are determined by a number of societal aspects, such as social institutions (for example, the educational system, the political system, the family, and so on), social norms (including gender norms, religious norms, cultural norms, and moral norms), traditions, and the behaviour of others in society (for example, stereotyping, prejudiced behaviour, racism,

sexism, homophobic behaviour, and so forth). The environmental conversion factors are determined by the environment in which a person lives – for example, whether deforestation has caused erosion and flooding that threaten the stability of one's shelter. The personal conversion factors are determined by one's mental and physical aspects; these personal characteristics, such as disabilities or bodily vulnerabilities, affect the type and degree of capabilities one can generate with resources.

Authors have mainly observed norms that curtail people's opportunities, rather than the social constraints on the process of choice itself which happens through a process of adaptation to the unfair situations in which group of people live. Their works endorsed Sen's focus on contingencies as dynamics detached from capabilities and adaptive preference.

2.4.3. Collective and group capabilities

The term 'collective capabilities' was first coined by Evans (2002). According to him,

In practice, my ability to choose the life I have reason to value often hangs on the possibility of my acting together with others who have reason to value similar things. Individual capabilities depend on collective capabilities. (...) Gaining the freedom to do the things that we have reason to value is rarely something we can accomplish as individuals. For those already sufficiently privileged to enjoy a full range of capabilities, collective action may seem superfluous to capability, but for the less privileged attaining development as freedom requires collective action. Organized collectivities – unions, political parties, village councils, women's groups, etc. – are fundamental to 'people's capabilities to choose the lives they have reason to value.'

As Murphy (2014: 323) notes, Sen himself alludes to the concept of 'collective capabilities':

that of a freedom which is only available to, and exercisable by, individual human agents working together as part of a group or collective (Sen 2002, 85; cf. Evans 2002, 56; Ibrahim 2006, 398 and 404; Foster and Handy 2009, 370). In other words, a collective capability is a freedom whose nature 'requires that it be sought in common' (Taylor, 1994: 59).

In parallel, for Stewart (2005), the concept of group capabilities refers not simply to the sum or average of individual capabilities, but to the capabilities that result from a

collective exercise and whose benefits accrue to the individual and the collectivity. Ibrahim (2014:52) recently defined 'collective agency [as] a self-empowering and dynamic process that allows (agents) not only to challenge the existing unequal power relations, but also to induce sustainable social change at the grassroots level (...) and to build their own collective capabilities and to protect the capabilities of future generations who could have been victims of such abusive traditions.' Those authors see the expansion of capabilities as a collective rather than an individual process. They affirm the importance of such notions, because:

Fostering the expansion of such means of collective action is central to the expansion of freedom. As in the case of Sen's other bases for freedom, the opportunity to join peers in collective action is valuable because of its 'intrinsic importance' as well as its 'instrumental effectiveness... to promote freedoms of other kinds'.

(Evans, 2002: xii)

Those authors highlight that some capabilities are essential for the self-empowerment of people - i.e. the ability for groups' co-optation, coalition, conscientisation, coordination or one's ability to aspire. Therefore,

'Various scholars undertook empirical studies to apply the concept of collective capabilities and explore how the poor collectively expand their capabilities by defending their rights (Kabeer, 2003), and form their self-help groups (Ibrahim, 2008). The concept has also been applied in a variety of areas, such as natural resource management (Pelenc, 2013); technology (Fernandez-Baldor et al., 2012); participatory methods (Frediani, 2010) and disability (Dubois and Trani, 2009).'

(Ibrahim, 2013: 4)

Yet, there is no unanimous agreement toward the validity of such concepts, nor 'a simple or unambiguous way to accommodate collectivities in the CA' (Lessman and Roche, 2013: 2). Sen himself rejects the concept of collective capabilities and prefers to label those capabilities that result from social interaction as 'socially dependent individual capabilities', notably because groups can also repress human freedoms (Sen, 2010). He asserts that the term 'collective capabilities' can only refer to 'capabilities related to

humanity', such as notable advances in the fight against child mortality (Sen, 2002: 85). Ibrahim (2013: 6) notes three specific elements of critiques of the concept 'due to (1) the potential negative impact of group affiliation, (2) the limitations on group formation among the poor and (3) the exclusionary nature of some groups' (e.g. Davis, 2013; Volkert, 2013). Moreover, for Alkire (2008b) this represents a 'prospective analysis', in opposition to the 'evaluative analysis' that is identifying people's functionings and capabilities.

Most scholars, whether or not adopting the previous concept, concede the importance of the study of collective practice for identifying their contribution to individual capabilities. For example, Stewart (2004: 4) noted the positive and negative impacts that groups can have: 'they are important, for good or ill – since people are essentially social their social networks form an important part of their total wellbeing. (...) collective action contributes directly to their status and self-respect (...)[,] improve their situation by enhancing their efficiency and increasing their power, economically or politically, thereby enabling them to enjoy a larger share of private or public resources'.

However, the study of collective or group capabilities that have been developed up to now have not yet sought to explain the complex processes, nor highlight the dynamics of empowerment that take place within groups. Moreover, those authors conceive collective and individual capabilities as cumulative information but not as dynamically interconnected capabilities.

2.4.4. Further ethical concerns

If the previous contributions consist in challenging what, in Sen's writings, tends to be understood as an 'ontological individualism'²⁹, and in complementing the CA's account of social factors, other scholars have noted that such questioning of the social and relational reality of capabilities brings up new undiscussed ethical concerns, notably about the 'fair acquisition' of capabilities. Sen himself reckons that social relations are the basic social processes that help people to improve their position: 'To be able to help oneself, anyone needs the hands of others in economic and social relationships (as Adam Smith (1776) noted more than two centuries ago)' (Sen, 1997: 167). However, Sen does not explore the way in which people secure their capabilities through their social interactions. For Gasper and Van Staveren (2003), the overemphasis of freedom as an individual property 'draw[s] the attention away from the critical importance of social relations and personal relationships in the wellbeing of humans' (Sarojini Hart, 2013). As Pettit (2001) argues, people maintain their capabilities in a web of social relations. The means by which one achieves functionings may differ and therefore matter. The authors offer to move the focus on one's ability to acquire resources in a network of competing actors, and on the social negotiation of their disempowerment. A few authors introduce further ethical concerns for the unfair processes through which people guarantee their capabilities. For Qizilbash (1996: 146) the acquisition of 'means to freedom must matter', because it echoes moral questions, as for example, the acquisition of capabilities through robbery. Bridges (2006: 18-9) expresses a similar concern:

We only introduce concerns to do with justice if it appears that access to such positions can be acquired unfairly (e.g. by bribery) or if it appears that

²⁹ This term coined by Robeyns (2000, 2005b) refers to the fact that the CA is ethically concerned with individual, while is not automatically individualistic ontologically or methodologically.

particular social groups are excluded from the competition on irrelevant grounds such as race.

Sen (2010: 295-6) reckons that the CA ‘fall[s] short of telling us enough about the fairness and equity of the processes involved, or about the freedom of citizens to invoke and utilize procedures that are equitable’.

In parallel, a debate about whether Sen’s notion of capabilities, as the ‘freedom to’ be and do what one’s values, overlooks accounting for ‘freedom from’ constraints.³⁰ Clark and Fennell (2014: 438), among others, argue that Sen’s

approach is concerned with positive freedom (freedom to exercise choice), rather than traditional notions of negative freedom, which demand that each and every person has certain rights (involving freedom from barriers, constraints and interference from others) that must not be violated.

Gasper and Staveren (2003: 139) claim it is inadequate to focus on positive freedom or ‘the ability to attain desired ends’ rather than the negative freedom, which is predominant in economics as the ‘constraints on one’s choice in the markets’. For Qizilbash (1996), Sen misses taking account of negative freedoms, i.e. freedom from control and coercion. Critics have consequently questioned the extent to which negative freedom can be included within a capability-inspired perspective (e.g. Carter, 1996; Cohen, 1994; Sugden, 1993).

A few authors have extended this question to the interplay between social structures, negative freedom and adaptive preferences. Cohen (1994) for example is concerned with collectives’ abilities to expand freedom by exercising control over others. Evans (2002: 56) notes that Sen

³⁰ It is however worth noting that the CA has been a main influence of the 1994 UNDP on Human Security ‘crafted by Mahbub ul Haq set the tone for all succeeding definitions by articulating a universal, preventive, “people-centred” approach that focused jointly on “freedom from fear and freedom from want”’ (Alkire, 2003: 5). The UNDP attempt to implement the CA comprises and focuses mainly on particular dimensions of negative freedom.

refrains from exploring the ways in which the concentration of economic power over the means of producing and diffusing culture might compromise my capability to decide what things I ‘have reason to value.’ (...) What is missing is an analysis of the extent to which modern market processes might constitute an impediment to the kind of deliberative preference formation that is essential to the expansion of capabilities. While Sen explicitly criticizes the choice-based utilitarianism of economics on grounds that its relation to individual wellbeing ‘is not very robust, since it can be easily swayed by mental conditioning and adaptive attitudes’ (62), he does not explore the ways in which influences on ‘mental conditioning’ might systematically reflect the interests of those with greater economic clout and political power.

Corbridge (2002: 203) agrees by arguing that the CA is ‘poorly equipped to deal with questions of entrenched power and the politics of conflict or social mobilization’. Sen (1992b: 71) acknowledges that

We may have political and ethical views regarding societies in which some people can promote all their ends while others have to face great barriers which they cannot overcome. (...) There are (...) contexts in which the relevant interpersonal comparisons may be precisely those of agency aspect – either of agency achievement or of agency freedom. We might wish to know who has how much power to pursue their own respective goals. We might also have interest in checking how successful they respectively are in bringing about what they are trying to achieve.

Moreover, I argue that we should question the correspondence between low levels of capabilities and low social positions (vertical inequalities) with – more or less matching – individual characteristics (horizontal inequalities) (Stewart, 2002; 2009). The relationship between social structures and the distribution of capabilities illustrates that capabilities may play a role in the social stratification of society and in the reproduction of social inequalities. Making sense of the social processes of the acquisition of capabilities would contribute to explaining the unequal distribution of capabilities according to the social contingencies described above.

2.5. Revisiting the agency, structure and capabilities relation

I agree with most critiques that we need a better understanding of cultural and social influences over people’s freedom, and accounting for the social and group anchorage of

people's capabilities. Not understanding the unequal way in which people acquire capabilities prevents the effective implementation in development policies of the CA's ambition to promote people's capabilities. Yet, I believe that listing contingencies or debating the individual or collective nature of the capabilities is not enough to address the gaps of the CA. On the contrary, I argue that to strengthen the CA, we need to revisit its fundamentals: questioning how Sen's argumentation conveys an understanding of the dynamics of agency and structures in shaping people's capabilities. I agree with Smith and Seward (2009) that whatever the nature of the question posed to the notion of capability, this last will automatically imply an understanding of the nature of 'agency', 'structure' and of their relation and role in shaping its components: choices (or values), abilities and opportunities. It operates as an additional filter of comprehension (or bias) and level of argumentation, which should be properly understood and discussed.

The CA should be valued for the strength of its moral argument: poverty and inequalities should matter for the sake of individuals only – i.e. for introducing the 'principle of each person as an end' (Nussbaum, 2000a) – and for the shift which it has triggered in re-centring on individuals' reality rather than on institutions and the material account of their lives. Yet, Sen's account of capabilities is grounded in an ontological exercise for defining the most appropriate space to evaluate people's disadvantage. I argue here that the CA misses to approach capabilities not only as the most informative picture of one's state of poverty and inequalities, but also as questioning the nature and entanglement of agency and social dynamics that shape one's advantages in society.

The philosophical considerations of picking and discussing the most accurate spaces to account for people's disadvantages regrettably led Sen to 'invalidate' looking at the relationship between one's set of capabilities, agency, structure and the interaction agency-structure. Moreover, I will illustrate below that Sen's implicit statements over the relation between agency and structure can be difficult to understand and contradictory, because his

discussion is interwoven into ethical, political and ontological dimensions. My argument is therefore that Sen's understanding of agency and structure, and of their importance in the formation of capabilities is misleading – because it is concerned with an ethical and political rather than with a sociological account of the formation of people's unequal capabilities. To my understanding, this lies at the heart of the limitation of the CA.

2.5.1. Sen's account of agency

On the one hand, Sen ethically restrains the concept of capability to someone's realised agency success and wellbeing freedom. He holds central the account of people's freedom irrespective of their action, and wellbeing over their – maybe misled – 'reason' to be and do. If agency commonly means 'the state of being in action or of exerting power', Sen only offers to retain a 'passive' form of such freedom. He insists in developing people's effective freedom to be and do, rather than either their control over their agency which may undermine their wellbeing, or their involvement into the realisation of such freedom.³¹

Not only Sen's concept of capabilities represents a limited account of people's agency, but also the CA overlooks the relationship between one's agency and his/her set of capabilities. Sen introduces the notions of choice, agency and wellbeing to better define capabilities as a more sensible space of disadvantage, but does not investigate how the three elements interact to strengthen or curtail one's set of capabilities. Consequently, it has not prevented many authors/policy makers from associating capabilities with an

³¹ See Table 4, p.51.

undefined notion of agency³², or to describe, as in the example of Lessman and Roche (2013: 3),

the distinction between wellbeing and agency [as] notoriously difficult and misty since the CA gives freedom and active choice a crucial role not only in striving for other goals but also in furthering wellbeing. In practice, the areas of wellbeing and agency are thoroughly intertwined.

The CA also ignores the way in which different forms of agency (and the social dynamics and processes through which people exert their agency) may contribute to the realisation of their ‘wellbeing freedom’ or ‘realised agency’ or worsen one’s relative set of capabilities. Only accounting for capability deprivation, the CA flattens many nuances brought about by the unequal powers and freedom that people have over their objectives. However, and unexpectedly, there is a consensus regarding the fact that people ‘acquire capabilities’ that still need to be elucidated. However, understanding such dynamics would be necessary if one’s is concerned with, or would like to ensure that people have a ‘fair’ (if not an equal) agency over their wellbeing freedom or over their realised agency.

2.5.2. Sen’s account of social structures

On the other hand, accounting for people’s capabilities represents a limited account of social structures and of the relation between one’s set of capabilities (realised agency success and wellbeing freedom) and social structures. Sen’s refusal to investigate (and endow) institutions in order to avoid creating an institutional approach of justice, has prevented capability theorists from investigating how social arrangements are shaping the redistribution of capabilities. In the same way, his disregard of the social and unequal distribution of capabilities prevents him from attempting to deliver any clearer guidance on

³² Such misreading of the notion of capabilities often holds together with the biased idea that ‘people have less agency when they have fewer choices [and opportunities]’ (Booth, 2014).

the way to fight against poverty and inequalities, as for example, how the distribution of capabilities occurs (or should occur). ‘Therefore, the question arises how the CA can accommodate collectivities and the role they play in the formation of capabilities’ (Lessman and Roche, 2013: 2).

Yet, Sen considers that one’s effective freedom and wellbeing should be guaranteed through an external deliberative and participative process. Volkert (2013: 10) comments that, to achieve the fairness promoted by the CA,

In an ideal world of economics, the state as a very large collectivity is supposed to provide all prerequisites of agency such as assets and personal, social or environmental conversion factors (Robeyns 2005) to sufficiently empower individuals. It will also use its monopoly of power to establish an opportunity structure that prevents power asymmetries among social actors who will gain equal effective power. In doing so, the state will ensure individuals’ ‘realized agency success’ (Sen 1992: 58) in the sense of a consistency of what the state provides with what individuals would like to achieve as agents. In the best case, even without direct individual participation and control, public policy will foster SHD [Sustainable Human Development] and enhance the individuals’ freedom to lead the life they would choose.

As the author noted, ‘realized agency success’ is the effects of ‘the agency of others and of institutions or circumstances’, but that ‘in practice, benefitting from or indirectly controlling ³³ institutions may not be sufficient’. The alignment between structural guarantees and people’s counterfactual decisions may seem hazardous. However, the extent to which social structures or people’s indirect agency (in deliberative and participative processes) may eventually (or not) guarantee the unequal interests and freedom of individuals still unclear. As Evans (2002) claims

Sen continues to be a good Manchester liberal. Classic liberal exaltation of the individual and an implicit acceptance of individual (as opposed to social)

³³ He refers there to the notion of indirect agency that ‘stands for individual citizens’ public reasoning envisioning a ‘government by discussion’ (Sen 2009: 324). This allows influencing and indirectly controlling social actors and institutions, e.g. the parliament to pass laws fostering SHD (Crocker and Robeyns 2010: 78).’

preferences as exogenous still characterize his work. His analysis focuses on individuals and their relation to an overall social context.

The CA condenses the account of structures into the process aspect of a person's capabilities (beyond contingencies). Yet, the account of the process aspect of a person's capabilities is reduced to checking that their realisation is in line with their 'counterfactual decisions'. This delimits the concept of 'critical agency' that Sen's adopts, as the aggregate of people's analysis of their freedom as matching their 'counterfactual decisions'. It is difficult to know the extent to which Sen thinks that such dynamics should ensure freedom to be effective, since he acknowledges neither the games of power over one's ability to operate control, nor, if wellbeing freedom is not achieved, how deliberative participation could lead to giving people's realized agency success away from their control.

Moreover, Sen's complex understanding of the value of people's agency for their empowerment, away from a reflection on the social advantages it may echo or represent, has nurtured a simplistic understanding of the structure behind people's (curtailed) freedom (or agency). In Sen's works, social structures are rarely recognised as what guarantee people's freedom (unless talking of democratic ones), but mainly refer to constraints over the realisation of an individual's valued doing and being. Moreover, social structure is opposed to wellbeing freedom rather than to the reasoned agency of individuals. Such a perspective is contained in the idea that 'unfreedom' corresponds to 'institutional injustices'. Doing this, Sen tends to reify the boundaries between agency, wellbeing, choice on the one hand and structural injustices on the other hand, in a way that resembles a dualism.

2.5.3. Adopting a monist sociological enquiry

Expanding on Martins' understanding of the ontological assumption of capabilities as causal powers³⁴, Smith and Seward (2009) call for clarifying the nature of social factors over people's capabilities, and therefore the perspective adopted on the relation between agency, structures and capabilities. One important gap of the CA is effectively not to include a critical account of such understanding. I agree with Martins (2006, 2007) and Smith and Seward (2009) that Sen's ontological definition of capabilities tends to translate a relational or dualist perspective of the parallel (yet interactive) reality of agency (mainly associated with one's abilities) and structures (contingencies or opportunities) in relation to capabilities. However, Sen's dualist view may recede at ethical and political levels, to serve particular arguments in contemporary debates, and lose its clarity and significance. It led Robeyns (2005b) to argue that Sen's position represents an 'ethical individualism' rather than a 'methodological or ontological individualism'. Sen's understanding of the relation between agency and structure can be difficult to understand, because his ethical and political positions may challenge the ontological dimension of capabilities, while his arguments interwoven in those three distinct spheres seems to be conflated.

Sen's CA presents elements of how to think about, at an ethical level, valuable and less desirable forms of agency and structures, but fails to understand, through a sociological analysis, the continuity between valued or undesirable forms of agency and structures, which the ontology of capabilities imply.³⁵ Therefore, the CA is poorly equipped to address dynamic questions regarding the way deliberative and participative

³⁴ See section 2.3.4, p. 55

³⁵ I reckon here that it was not part of Sen's agenda to develop such understanding and that he did not have to do so to put forth such argument to discuss the value of the capability approach, imbued mainly with a philosophical/moral concern.

structures, the agents themselves, and collectives may guarantee or constrain people's capabilities. Sen's CA effectively legitimates a focus on poverty as a relatively passive aggregate of individual realities, rather than as a dynamic and multiple reality influenced by people's direct or indirect agencies, and by social structures. Therefore, as noted by Keleher (2014: 64),

some familiar with utilitarianism may conflate Sen's relatively objective concept of wellbeing, which reflects actively being and doing, with the more traditional utilitarian concept of 'wellbeing' which is passive, and problematically subjective (Nussbaum 2000 p. 111 - 161; see also Sen 1985 p. 53)

Even if we maintain the CA's main objective of re-centring the analysis of development on individuals and the fight against their restriction to be and do what they value, it is necessary to understand the unequal dynamics that shape the distribution of people's capabilities, or that support their acquisition of capabilities.

To do so, I propose to consider a more complex definition of the agency-structure relation, along with a more comprehensive definition of freedom, not only as an individual attribute curtailed by others and institutions (negative freedom), but also as a way to guarantee one's entitlements. By contrast to Smith and Seward (2009) who defend Sen's dualist ontological approach, I offer to adopt a monist approach, that is, regarding the connection between agency and structure as a part of a unique and coherent reality. Moreover, I suggest that we consider the concept of capability not only as a moral currency of justice, promoting people's freedom to be and do what they value, but also as a concept through which we can understand comprehensively the diverse causal relations that shape the unequal probability in the society for people to be able to be and do what they value.

I therefore claim that we have to adapt the CA to a monist sociological enquiry, in order for it to achieve fully its comprehensive informational purpose, not only on people's (limited) set of capabilities, but also on the social dynamics that trigger them. This would help understanding the social dynamics behind the complex and interconnected (passive)

social distribution and people's unequal (active) acquisition of capabilities. It is necessary to understand how we could effectively promote (or guarantee a minimum threshold) of human capability. It would ground the 'prospective' discussions about the way in which people acquire capabilities, and about how to implement such dynamics through development policies.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the CA represents a great attempt to overcome previous institutional approaches to social justice, notably by gauging the freedom and the 'individual advantage' (Sen, 2010: 232-3) that a person may acquire through exchanges. The assessment of opportunities, which Sen argues as the most relevant space of comparison (Sen, 2009: 371), offers firstly, to focus on outcomes rather than on arrangements of justice, and secondly, to overcome an income-led definition of poverty or the limits raised by a self-assessment of wellbeing. However, if the definition of capabilities in the CA corresponds to an ethical enterprise, that is, defining the most appropriate space to evaluate people's disadvantage, the extent to which it ought to be a project of development remains unclear. I have finally argued that the CA fails to question capabilities not only as the most informative picture of one's state of poverty and inequalities, but also as the outcome of the interaction between agency and social dynamics that may reproduce one's disadvantages in society. To do so, I propose to adopt a monist sociological enquiry to understand the relation between one's set of capabilities, agency, structure and the agency-structure interaction. In the next chapter, I will argue how Bourdieu's monist approach will help to address the gaps left open by Sen's CA for questioning the nature of exchanges in its relation to one's capabilities.

Chapter 3. **Bourdieu: A sociology of practice**

Chapter 2 argued that Sen's CA provides a framework for evaluating different forms of exchange in terms of their contribution to people's capabilities. Chapter 3 will show how Bourdieu's sociology not only addresses the gaps in Polanyi's approach, but also how it understands the agency-structure relation that is ignored by Sen's CA. In contrast to both Polanyi and Sen, Bourdieu offers a deep understanding of the reproduction of social inequalities and exposes the social structures that shape people's life-styles, such as their opportunities and choices. He also makes sense of people's different powers and struggles over the structure, 'transcend[ing] the artificial opposition that is thus created between 'structures and representations' (Bourdieu, 1989: 15)³⁶.

This chapter will insist that Bourdieu's sociology helps to complement Sen's and Polanyi's work in order to understand capabilities in the interplay between agency and structure. The contributions of the authors are explored respectively in each section of this chapter as follows. Firstly, the continuity between Bourdieu's concept of capitals with Sen's understanding of capabilities and functionings on the one hand, and between Bourdieu's concept of habitus and Sen's understanding of adaptive preferences on the other hand, helps to make sense of the nature of the unequal social structure of capability deprivation. Secondly, Bourdieu makes sense of the objective and subjective dynamics of

³⁶ The reference made here is of the 'dialectical relationship' of sociology debates evoked above. Bourdieu

strives to circumvent or dissolve the oppositions that have defined perennial lines of debate in the social sciences: between subjectivist and objectivist modes of theorizing, between the material and symbolic dimensions of social life, as well as between interpretation and explanation, synchrony and diachrony, and micro and macro levels of analysis.

(Wacquant, 2006: 4)

recognition and rewards that structure people's unequal opportunities. This section also discusses the expansion of the liberal market in the economic field. Explaining patterns of conversion of capital, Bourdieu initiates a reflection on the role of exchanges, and the predominant role of market exchanges, in the redistribution of resources. Finally, Bourdieu comments on the power of the state and groups, through their social struggle, over the renegotiation of one's entitlements. The Bourdieusian framework therefore allows an understanding of dominant institutions and fields – such as the state and the markets – as central for the symbolic treatment of others, for their entitlements and the reproduction of social inequalities.

3.1. Capitals, habitus and the distribution of capabilities

Bourdieu's concept of capitals and habitus help to make sense of the social distribution of people's life-styles and advantages in society. This section demonstrates that taking into account the connection between capabilities, capitals and dispositions, allows us better to understand capabilities and their social distribution.

3.1.1. Comparing Sen and Bourdieu

Sen and Bourdieu come from different academic backgrounds and traditions: Sen is an economist and philosopher while Bourdieu was a sociologist who became, later in his career, an activist. Their approaches diverge mainly in terms of the nature of their disciplines, the terminologies they use and their point of departure. Yet, they pursue similar projects: denouncing the entrenchment of social disadvantages and advancing knowledge on the multidimensional aspects of poverty and inequalities. Both authors are concerned with inequalities, and, in order to explain them, they 'understood the importance of resources beyond the economic' (Bowman, 2010: 4). Sen understands capabilities in a

complex interaction with means and functioning, and values the individual command over resources through the opportunity aspect of choice. Bourdieu rather describes the multiple natures of resources and their role in defining one's social position. Bourdieu not only focused on the social dynamic that reproduces life styles and chances in contemporary societies, but also initiated a reflection on the processes of redistribution of resources and dispositions.

Different authors have acknowledged the interest of considering Sen and Bourdieu together. Despite pursuing divergent objectives³⁷, they share their optimism about the possibilities offered by combining Sen's and Bourdieu's analytical frameworks.³⁸ As Bowman (2010: 14) concludes, the combination of the two approaches makes sense

because social and economic policy have been hijacked by narrow economic and psychological frameworks that focus on individual 'choices' and behaviours[. Therefore,] there is an urgent need to embrace broader frameworks that enable an understanding of the social and cultural constraints on choice and the processes that shape the persistence of disadvantage and poverty.

Abel and Frohlich (2012: 236) rightfully noted that Bourdieu's sociology 'allows for the consideration of structural conditions as well as an active role for individuals as agents in reducing [health] inequalities'.

³⁷ Abel and Frohlich (2012: 236) aimed 'to examine the theoretical foundations for a structure-agency approach to the reduction of social inequalities'. Bowman (2010: 3-4) tried to 'enable a deeper understanding of the processes and experience of inequalities'. Roche (Roche, 2009: 2) agrees that the sociological tradition on social stratification and reproduction can be approached as complementary in its description of the structural impact of the social life, as 'arrangement of life chances and choices'. Bebbington (1999: 2021) aimed 'to develop an analytical framework for analysing rural livelihoods in terms of their sustainability and their implications for rural poverty'. In a far more complete monograph, Caroline Sarojini Hart considers the capability to aspire as an important element structuring people's capabilities. She uses Bourdieu to understand the process influencing people's aspirations. To do so, she created a 'Sen-Bourdieu analytical framework (SBAF)' but recognises working on 'a small fraction of (Bourdieu's) work' (2013: 49).

³⁸ Except Roche (2009) and Sarojini-Hart's (2013) attempt to build a combined analytical framework, these works only underlined the interest of crossing the Sen and Bourdieu's points of views on inequalities. Each author's particular contribution to the combination of both frameworks will be referenced progressively in this chapter.

3.1.2. Bourdieu's account of one's advantages

If Sen's adoption of the concept of capabilities distances his approach from a materialist account of one's resources, Bourdieu argues that 'to account for the structure and functioning of the social world', we need to consider the 'capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory' (Bourdieu, 1986: 46). According to Bourdieu, resources are composed of capitals that are not only economic, but also social or cultural, and are not only present in a material or 'reified' form but appear under different forms, such as skills or contacts, as 'embodied', 'exclusive' or 'living' resources. Moreover, resources are convertible and reinforce each other:

as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications [or intellectual rights]; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.

(Bourdieu, 1986: 47)

As Abel and Frohlich (2012: 238) correctly noted, '[a] critical aspect to Bourdieu's capital theory is that no single one of the three forms of capital alone can fully explain the reproduction of social inequalities; it takes all three, and importantly, the interaction between the three to permit for social inequalities to endure over time'.

Similarly to Sen, Bourdieu denounces people's disadvantages. However, Bourdieu understands one's disadvantage in relative terms, as a function of one's endowment in resources, rather than in Sen's absolute term, and acknowledges particular capability deprivations. Sen's understanding effectively tends to acknowledging one's freedom as a reified set of opportunities, which therefore invites a listing of desirable capabilities. According to Bourdieu (1986: 46), the unequal distribution of capitals amongst individuals in the society is the first element that determines social structures of the society: 'the

structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world'. Thus,

agents are distributed in the overall social space, in the first dimension, according to the overall volume of capital they possess and, in the second dimension, according to the structure of their capital, that is, the relative weight of the different species of capital, economic and cultural, in the volume of their assets.

(Bourdieu, 1989: 17)

In the occidental society and at the turn of the 21st century, Bourdieu considered that economic and cultural capitals particularly influence the structuring of the social order and mainly 'define the two oppositions that undergird major lines of cleavage and conflict in advanced society' (Wacquant, 2006: 10).

Capitals thus position people in a non-fortuitous social order of opportunities. The different capitals are

what makes the games of society – not least, the economic game – something other than simple games of chance offering at every moment the possibility of a miracle. (...) Capital (...) is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible.

(Bourdieu, 1986: 46)

According to Bourdieu, one's position in the society is shaped and at the same time shapes one's set of resources and dispositions – i.e. capital (whether economic, social, cultural or symbolic) and habits. Moreover, people's set of resources and relative position in the social sphere define their dispositions. He adds that people's set of capitals 'imply an adjustment to this position, what Goffman calls the 'sense of one's place'' (Bourdieu, 1989: 17). Reciprocally, people's resources and dispositions limit and determine potential life course or likely life-styles. Those dispositions, called habitus, are both cognitive, i.e. schemes of perception and appreciation of the world, and practical, i.e. embodied practices. Habitus constitutes a 'universe of tacit presuppositions' that organise people's actions and perception of practice. The particular experience and social trajectory of the agents shape

their habitus, as much as habitus shapes their experience and trajectory though the perception of constraints and possibilities:

These unconscious schemata are acquired through lasting exposure to particular social conditions and conditionings, via the internalization of external constraints and possibilities. (...) As the mediation between past influences and present stimuli, habitus is at once *structured*, by the patterned social forces that produced it, and *structuring*: it gives form and coherence to the various activities of an individual across the separate spheres of life. This is why Bourdieu defines it variously as 'the product of structure, producer of practice, and reproducer of structure,' the 'unchosen principle of all choices,' or 'the practice-unifying and practice-generating principle' that permits 'regulated improvisation' and the 'conductorless orchestration' of conduct.

(Wacquant, 2006: 6-7)

Habitus forms clear schemes of practice and representation that, alongside resources acquired in specific conditions of existence, shape people's classifiable life-styles. Bourdieu sees habitus as the real embodiment of social structure in individuals. Habitus becomes then 'a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170).

Bourdieu adds that habitus as an embodied structure, may evolve, adapting to the (evolution of the) social context:

[T]hese systems of dispositions are malleable, since they inscribe into the body the evolving influence of the social milieu, but within the limits set by primary (or earlier) experiences, since it is habitus itself which at every moment filters such influence.

(Wacquant, 2006: 6-7)

Such adaptation happens in conformity through the filter of past experiences.

3.1.3. Sen's capabilities vs. Bourdieu's habitus

In his combination of the CA and Bourdieu's sociology, Roche (2009) accounts for habitus and social stratifications evidenced by Bourdieu, as contingencies over capabilities.

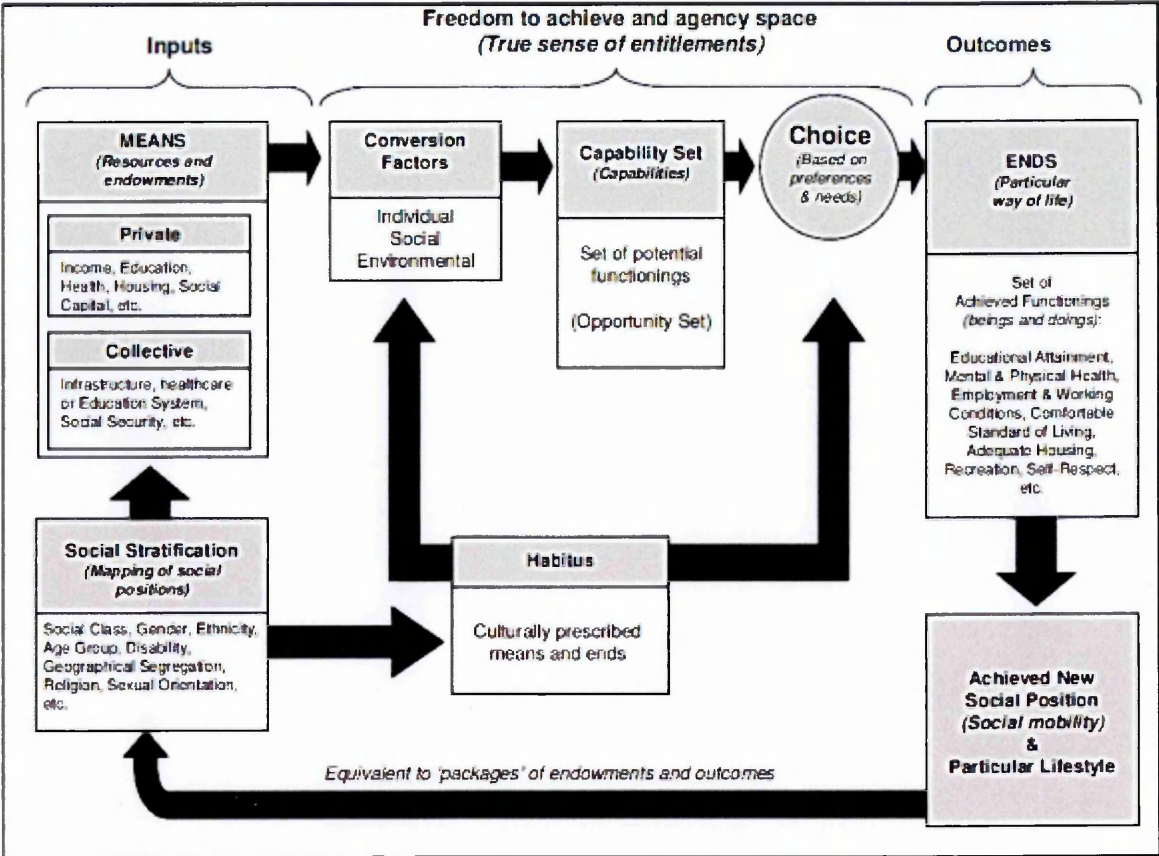


FIGURE 4: INTERPRETATION OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BOURDIEU'S AND SEN'S FRAMEWORK BY ROCHE (2009)

For Roche (2009: 4), '[g]roups (...) have [thus] an influence on people's life chances by means of habitus and dispositions, which are culturally prescribed means and ends'. He notes that

while the scheme is static, the processes behind the attainment of people's sets of resources, endowments, achieved functionings and capabilities are very much dynamic. (...) Making a choice at any given time clearly affects a person's set of opportunities in the future.

(Roche, 2009: 3).

I agree with this circular understanding of the dynamics that constrain capabilities, which breaks with the CA linear interpretation.³⁹ Those are not any more thought as

³⁹ See Figure 2, p.44

external, but internalised influences shaped by one's social position. Yet, Roche's interpretation partly re-endorses Sen's understanding of the influence of social structure. Those are again interpreted to play a role at intermediary levels: over conversion factors and constrained choices in line with Sen's understanding. For Roche, they only influence the way one may use their resources or chose. For example, he omits considering habitus as an embodied structure crystalizing past experiences, as explored in this chapter's earlier section, and ignore accounting for its influence over one's means, ends and ability to be and do what he values, in line with their choices and conversion factors.

I argue that Bourdieu's concepts of capital, habitus and dispositions challenge further the division between agency, structures and people's objective capabilities and allow an understanding of resources, functionings and, therefore capabilities, in a more circular and complex way. In turn, this challenges Sen's interpretation of people's freedom to choose and act. Bourdieu's concepts of capitals and habitus and Sen's notion of means are closely linked. They constitute, for both authors, resources for action. Sen only refers to resources in a 'material' way, as means of freedom and means to achieve, and in a linear interpretation of the relationship between resources, capabilities and functionings. Sen made a clear distinction between resources (as means of freedom) and achievements (as functionings), from capabilities as a main concern for the assessment of social justice (Sen, 1992a). If it is a great ethical advance in the attempt to overcome previous material and utilitarian perspectives of justice, in practice, this distinction is not straightforward.

For Bourdieu, previous achievements also turn into resources, and shape one's action (dispositions or scheme of production of practice): it is a situated means and lenses for action. Resources, achievements and dispositions, Bourdieu reveals, operate complex dynamics of reinforcement. Dispositions, which are the ability to act and think in a certain ways and which results from previous achievements, constitute means for action. Effectively, one's opportunity to integrate into school would depend on previous

functionings such as being able to read and count, to value education or to know how to behave in this particular institution. For Bourdieu, obtaining a degree for example, should be seen not only as an achievement, but also as constituting in itself a resource (a symbolic and cultural capital) that will endow someone with further opportunities to function. In this case, capitals are closer to Sen's notion of functionings or achievement. Sen's means and functionings, Bourdieu's sociology reveals, are the two sides of the same coin in the dynamic of endowment to further functionings. They are elements of resources that Bourdieu described as a set of capitals and habitus.⁴⁰ They both matter for reinforcing one's capabilities.

Widening the notion of resources and their role in people's action (habits and functionings) through a Bourdieusian understanding, consequently raises questions about the relationship between people's opportunity and choice, that is, their capabilities, and their social position.

⁴⁰ To simplify the argument, this thesis uses the notion of resources common to Sen and Bourdieu, rather than of capitals, but it retains a Bourdieusian definition of resources as multidimensional in nature (being economic, social, cultural and possessing a symbolic dimension - see later) but also in shape (material, contained in embodied dispositions or as institutionalised achievement). This chapter however discusses in detail Bourdieu's concept to explore how such an understanding offers a revisiting of the concept of capabilities.

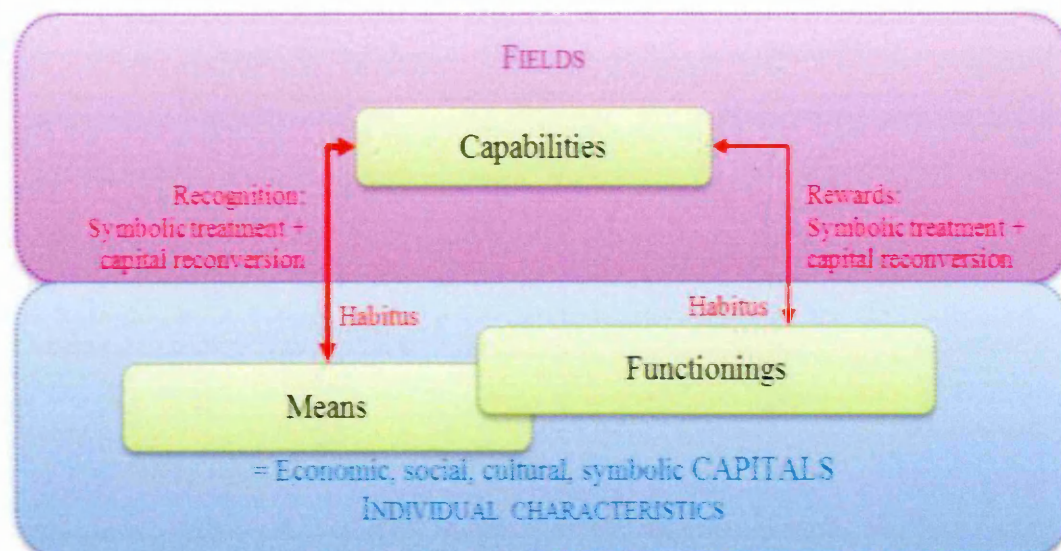


FIGURE 5: DYNAMIC RELATION BETWEEN CAPABILITIES, RESOURCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS VS. CAPITALS AND HABITUS

As I have shown above, means and functionings can be perceived as resources that are in turn capitals and habitus, and as involved in a dynamic of reinforcement of one's capabilities – i.e. opportunity to act and choose.

Moreover, we can argue that, because of the dynamics of reinforcement between resources and functionings, which frame one's level of capabilities, one's social position in society deeply conditions, as well as is conditioned by the set of capabilities one possesses. Bourdieu's paradigm challenges the understanding of the nature of the capabilities: opportunities and choices are by themselves structured and structuring, and depend on one's resources and dispositions (or achievements), rather than an attribute of individuals which social structures constrain. This helps us to account for the continuity of social structures with of people's agency over one's set of capabilities, through the resources, the lenses (choices) and embodied habitus formed in previous situated experiences. Capabilities, seen as situated opportunities, can in turn become elements that shape and reproduce social inequalities. Their un-discriminated promotion (i.e. the general advancement of people's capabilities argued by Sen) may therefore not fulfil egalitarian moral ambition for social justice, but fuel existing inegalitarian dynamics. The processes of

reproduction of the unequal empowerment of individuals elucidated by Bourdieu help us to understand such dynamics as a matter of concern for development.

3.1.4. Adaptive preference vs. habitus and capabilities

In a parallel way, we can understand social constraints over capabilities through interrogating the connection between adaptive preferences and habitus. Sen's CA benefits greatly from the concept of adaptive preferences in order to legitimate the focus on capabilities – rather than on one's wellbeing self-assessment.⁴¹ I argue however that the concept of habitus illustrates that a focus on one's capabilities does not do away with the concerns for acknowledging one's adaptive preferences. Therefore, they should be explored as complementary matters of social justice.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus, as a scheme of action and representation of the world, acts as a tacit adaptation to one's social context and set of opportunities. It echoes what Sen describes with the concept of 'adaptive preferences'. In line with Bourdieu's understanding of habitus, Sen suggests that 'the issue of adaptive preferences is related to an account of 'adapted perceptions'' (Sen, 1985: 196) and the acceptance (or rather the 'unconscious' embodiment in Bourdieu) of the 'legitimacy of the unequal order' (Sen, 1990: 126). Adapted perceptions might induce people to adhere to an unjust order such that they become 'an implicit accomplice' (Sen, 1990: 126) of the system. Therefore, I agree with Bridges (2006: 16) that

the notion of adaptive preference draws attention to the way in which external constraints [rather than internal constraints] become internalised (for example, as low aspirations, limited imagination, contentment with one's lot).

⁴¹See section 2.2.2, p.42

However, adaptive preferences or habitus question the distinction between capabilities and social structures, and the relative objectivity of the promotion of individual choice central in the CA. In contrast to people's resigned adaptations to their low levels of choices and opportunities such as evoked in the CA, Bourdieu considers that people's embodiment of social structures actively structures their schemes of appreciation and therefore potential life course: their understanding and enactment of their choice and opportunities. The adjustment of one's desire to match the social and cultural context, acts in the restriction of one's opportunities and choices and materialise social structures. One's habitus – with the embodiment of social structures – directly shapes one's level of capabilities. People's internalisation of contextual constraints not only lowers their levels of satisfaction, but conditions the process of making choices, which more or less self-consciously anticipate potential sets of opportunities (Bridges, 2006; Teschl and Comim, 2005). Therefore, Sarojini Hart (2013) considers the capability to aspire, directly shaped by social factors and context, as a filter to the acquisition of other capabilities and as a key element to promote one's greater empowerment. It raises questions about how to treat low (or unequal) expectations as a matter of social justice. Adaptive preferences should be explored, in complement to one's level of capabilities, because they structure them rather than acting only as peripheral contingencies.

However, this poses an ethical conflict since 'adaptive preferences' have been principally understood through their 'positive' role in helping people to cope with unjust backgrounds and to adapt to a realistic set of opportunities and freedom to choose. It is seen as the ability to adapt to social injustices without suffering from them. Therefore, people 'can live in contentment (understood as being a reasonable match between what is desired and what is experienced) rather than in constant frustration (understood as a mismatch between what is desired and what is experienced)' (Bridges, 2006: 21). Nussbaum was then able to argue that: 'we probably shouldn't encourage people to persist

in unrealistic aspiration' (Nussbaum 2005: 138, in Sarojini Hart, 2013). I agree that it is crucial to recognise the importance for people to live without unbearable frustrations regarding their lack of opportunities. Yet, this is not a reason for shirking the consideration, at philosophical and political levels, of adaptive preferences as a central matter of social justice along with the unequal distribution of capabilities. We should aim to understand and manage expectations better, in order to widen people's capabilities, and control their unequal social distribution.

Beyond asking what makes capabilities or aspirations unrealistic, we should try to understand how self-expectations shape not only the perception of one's wellbeing, but also the access to a set of capabilities and the reproduction of inequalities. In other words, we have to question what structures the social distribution of self-expectations alongside the distribution of capabilities. Bridges started to suggest elements in this direction. He proposes an identity and relational account that is compatible with Bourdieu's in depth analysis of the reproduction of social structures. For Bridges (2006: 15), social and cultural constraints on satisfaction, choices and opportunities are connected to processes of identification:

All choice is significantly adaptive and has its roots in a self which neither in its development nor in its current agency is detached from the social context in which it has been constructed, with which it identifies and from which that identity itself derives many of its features'.

Bridges adds that choices are limited by people's own perception of their identity and their need to express and reinforce that identity. It 'provides the source of the choice which will be made'. Yet, 'identity (...) is itself borrowed at least in part from the circumstances to which we are born or under which we are nurtured'. Moreover, 'life choices are not just choices made in isolation: they imply new identities, and they imply new sets of social relations and new social norms' (2006: 23).

3.2. Subjective and procedural structures of recognition

Bourdieu not only explains the social distribution of one's opportunities as the mirror of one's 'objective' resources and social position (i.e. capitals and habitus). He uncovers two further dynamics that explain the correlation between one's capabilities, resources and social positions, and that guarantee the reproduction of people's unequal empowerment. Firstly, he identifies processes of reconversion of resources into opportunities to act and to acquire further means for action. The social processes that endorse this role, in Bourdieu, resemble to social exchanges. Secondly and simultaneously, he deciphers the symbolic orders that define the 'subjective' interpretation of the values and rewards attributed to objective elements. The latter (processes of reconversion) enact and convey the former (subjective symbolic order⁴²) to ground one's unequal opportunities into a complicit unequal entitlement to further resources. Therefore, those procedural and cultural structures shape the reproduction of inequalities. This section will illustrate those dynamics and their inscription into the doxa of a field.

3.2.1. Fields as spaces of recognition and action

For Bourdieu, it is through fields that people can function and be entitled to further resources, and hence will acquire and guarantee their sets of capabilities.⁴³ Independent but interconnected, each field contains

its institutions..., its rules of functioning, its agents selected in accordance with certain (electoral) procedures, etc., [it] is an autonomous world, a microcosm

⁴² Since symbols are cultural traits contained in the doxa of a field, I refer to the subjective symbolic order as cultural structures of exchanges and capabilities distribution.

⁴³ Bourdieu applied his conceptual framework to many fields, both global – political, economic, religious, legal, education, or of cultural production – and more restrained – journalistic, academic, of art.

set within the social macrocosm. [A field is] a kind of small universe caught up in the laws of functioning of the larger universe, but nonetheless endowed with a relative autonomy within that universe and obeying its own laws, its own *nomos* – in a word, autonomous.

(Bourdieu, 2005a: 32)

For example, searching for aesthetic in the field of art, or making actualities transparent in the journalistic field, constitute independent *nomos*. Yet, the *nomos* of those fields intermingle, pushing the journalist to communicate news in an aesthetic way, as well as the artist to reflect on events happening in our society. Complementarily, the *doxa* of a field is a ‘set of shared opinions and unquestioned beliefs (such as the sacred devotion to reason among scientists) that bind participants to one another’ (Wacquant, 2006: 9). The rules of the game are constitutive of the *doxa* of a field and act as ‘tacit presuppositions that we accept as the natives of a certain society’ (Bourdieu, 2005a: 37). Adopting the *doxa* of one’s field considerably shapes one’s *habitus*.

In a manner analogous to a game, a given social field is structured by field-specific rules, norms, roles, and scripts that channel and constrain the range of acceptable (or unacceptable) practices and systematically pattern outcomes and resource distributions (i.e., who wins the valued resources that are at stake).

(Üstüner and Thompson, 2012: 799)

People inherit those specific laws: ‘the historical embodiment of these rules (...) brings about *dispositions* to perceive, act, and react, in terms of a certain *habitus*’ (Dufour, 2010: 182). Fields are ‘universes’ in which a specific and implicit *habitus* is expected and shaped, conform to their specific *doxa*. The individual adhesion to the field is assured by the ‘*illusio*’: the individual belief that the game is worth playing, a ‘necessary belief and investment of an agent in the value of a game’ (Dufour, 2010: 182). Individuals sharing a common *illusio* reinforce and reproduce the rules of the field, by ‘helping – more or less completely, depending on the field – to produce belief in the value of the stakes’ (Bourdieu, 1994: 74). This has different implications.

Firstly, fields act as particular and different spaces of social recognition. In order for people to function, they have not only to act within particular fields, but also to dispose of the resources and dispositions that the field particularly values. Becoming a renowned cineaste, banker or politician would imply being involved in particular (sub-)fields of the society – e.g. artistic, economic, political (sub-)fields - as well as developing particular sets of valued resources. Fields are key social spaces in which we act, but which rule people's relative opportunities to act through the relative adequacy (or recognition) of their capitals and dispositions. According to those field-related or 'wider social field related' symbolic and entitling dynamics, 'resources may lose their potential (...) benefits and turn into questionable assets' (2012: 238). Thus, if a person does not fulfil the conditions to access a field (which are likely to be a certain level of knowledge and/or economic resources in modern societies), then he may experience a lack of power over his resources. Put differently, one's resources are not systematically a 'means of freedom'. Freedom is bound to the rules of recognition of one's resources and dispositions within fields. The concept of fields and doxa become necessary in order to account for the social conditions that make sense of people's opportunities to be and do what they value.

Secondly, fields act as particular and different spaces of social recognition, conditioning one's functioning. Fields' relative doxas represent for people the opportunity as well as it affects one's choice to function. Fields are thus spheres in which one's habitus turns out to be real and operational. Bourdieu (1984: 101) attempted to summarise this idea through the following equation:

$$[(\text{habitus}) (\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$$

Crossley (2003: 44) notes that

Practice, for Bourdieu, is an effect of actions and interactions which are shaped, simultaneously and in equal measure, by the habitus and capital of agents, as well as the context and dynamism constituted by their shared participation in a common 'game' or 'market' (field).

Consequently, one's insertion into particular fields, alongside previously acquired resources and their recognition, structures one's set of capabilities. Fields determine one's social identity and possible levels of achievement.

Thirdly, fields not only recognise people differently, but also provide them with particular entitlements to prospective functionings or resources through respective rules of capital reconversion. The value of one's capitals and dispositions within a field not only condition the power one will have to be part of and to function within it, but also one's level of endowment and entitlement. Effectively, '[doxas] are a sort of ideological mechanism; they are a mechanism that produces an unequal distribution of personal capital, and they legitimate this production' (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1991: 113). Through rules of reconversion of capitals within fields. Effectively, Bourdieu (1986: 49) reckons that

the capital, (...) depends for its real efficacy on the form of the distribution of the means of appropriating the accumulated and objectively available resources; and the relationship of appropriation between an agent and the resources objectively available.

Fields' specific and independent rules of recognition, or symbolic appreciation of objective differences, structure the division of the social sphere. One's involvement in a field and the relative rules of recognition and entitlement that its doxa validates, enables and constrains one's further opportunities. Therefore,

The most basic economic dispositions – needs, preferences, propensities – are not exogenous, that is to say, dependent on a universal human nature, but endogenous and dependent on a history that is the very history of the economic cosmos in which these dispositions are required and rewarded.

(Bourdieu, 2005b: 8)

Consequently, a field's subjective and symbolic appreciation of one's resources, gives people the credit to reproduce their situated social advantage. The circular dynamics

between capabilities, means and functionings take place in a continuum between social structures (whether structural or procedural) and individuals.⁴⁴ I therefore argue that rather than being individual attributes, capabilities are at the interplay between individuals and the structures (fields) in which they evolve.

A Bourdieusian approach helps us to understand individual opportunities as subjects of discriminatory rules (which we will describe as the combination of rules of capital recognition and a symbolic interpretation) embodied in the individual's habitus. Therefore, 'one can truly understand [one's individual advantage] only through an analysis of the invisible structures that are fields, and, (...) through an analysis of some particularly invisible structures, namely the relation between these (...) fields' (Bourdieu, 2005a: 30). The study of the reproduction of, and fight against, poverty and inequalities would gain insight by investigating the schemes of appreciation and reconversion of capitals related to particular fields and across fields, along with analysing how those enhance and curtail individuals' capabilities. Effectively, the concept of field is of great assistance for understanding the complexity and the different challenges that deprivation and empowerment mean across the social sphere. It allows an account of what Sen (1997: 157) has reported as the different spaces of deprivation across the social sphere:

The important issue to note here is (...) the conflict between distinct inequalities judged in different spaces. For example, income inequalities may substantially diverge from inequalities of political freedoms, and health inequalities can differ from both. We do have reason to attach importance to each.

Bourdieu offers an accurate tool for making sense of the nature and dynamics behind the diverse spaces of (dis)empowerment, as corresponding to multiple fields and rules of recognition and entitlement in choices or opportunities.

⁴⁴ See Figure 5, p.83

3.2.2. Rules of capital reconversion

According to Bourdieu, one's empowerment can be understood in more detail through the rules of capital reconversion that the doxa of a field supports. Capitals, according to Bourdieu, are first obtained during primary socialisation, and through an individual's work over themselves throughout a lifetime, e.g. dedicating time to learning or embodying dispositions. He described the former as 'the best hidden and socially most determinant educational investment, namely, the domestic transmission of cultural capital', relayed by the 'educational system (...) sanctioning the hereditary transmission of cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1986: 48). If his focus on primary socialisation tends to present a passive and deterministic sociology, his understanding of the complex processes of reconversion of previous resources illustrates the ongoing dynamic of the reproduction of social advantages over a lifetime (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979).

Abel and Frohlich (2012: 238) summarised the dynamics (conversion, accumulation and transmission) between the different 'capitals' that Bourdieu described as dynamics of capital reconversion:

[Firstly,] the different forms of capital can be converted one into another; economic capital, in the form of money, can be invested in order to improve one's education or cultural capital. [Secondly,] capital in these different forms can be accumulated; money can be invested in the stock market, for instance, in order to make more money. [Thirdly,] the different forms of capital can be transmitted; children can inherit financial assets from parents and/or capital can be received through family socialization e.g. when knowledge and social skills are passed on from parents to their children.

Through the above dynamics, Bourdieu describes in detail how one's resources are processed, and how they condition access to further resources. The authors, Abel and Frohlich (2012: 238) added conditionality as another element of the list:

[Fourthly,] different forms of capital, in their acquisition and use, are dependent and conditional on each other. For instance, cultural capital is essential in the acquisition of social capital; certain values, communication styles and behavioural skills are expected from all those who want to belong to, and participate in, powerful social networks. The (gainful) use of economic capital

might depend on the authorizing properties of higher educational degrees and on the knowledge that comes with it.

Processes of capital reconversion stress the key function of enabling the balanced conversions of giving and receiving, which we can attribute, along with other social functions, to social exchanges. Bourdieu focuses essentially on an individual's relation to resources and the 'patterned' treatment of each other's resources.⁴⁵ If Bourdieu did not expand on the way in which those mechanisms are normed socially, nevertheless an implicit link between rules of capital reconversion, doxas and symbolic rules of entitlement appears through one's involvement in different social fields. For example, despite claiming the multidimensional aspects of one's set of capitals, Bourdieu thinks that the value of economic capital is of a particular nature, since 'different types of capital can be derived from *economic capital*'. This capital is more likely to offer reconversion possibilities than other capitals in different social fields, translating the domination of the market field and of the liberal doxa it endorses, which particularly values economic capital. Rules of capital reconversion are consistent patterns dissociated from what Bourdieu called the doxa of one's field, but observed across fields. Yet, they constitute an account of different processes of entitlement, which 'materialize' symbolic appreciations.

3.2.3. Symbolic order and symbolic violence

Norms of recognition and entitlement in fields should be understood further through the subjective interpretation of one's characteristics that they enable. This passes through symbolic systems of classification of individuals' tastes and practices, which constitute

⁴⁵ Bourdieu does not endorse an ethical and moral concern about the 'fairness' of those practices, nor their social role or use. He omits evaluating the comparative advantage of those processes of capital reconversion in the social reproduction of inequalities, which he otherwise denounces. In this thesis, the adoption of Sen's CA allows this gap to be addressed, with a focus on the social exchanges which make such rules of reconversion material, rather than on Bourdieu's processes of capital reconversion.

what we may call symbolic rules of capital recognition and reconversion. Particular to and varying across fields, they represent evolving cultural structures.

Transcribed in our vocabulary, symbolic systems of classification appear through "epistemological couples" constructed through and used to apprehend the social reality (Bourdieu, 1991a). Words are

categories of perception (...) that are themselves partly the product of the incorporation of social structures. [They work through] categories [applied] to the world – for example, masculine/feminine, high/low, rare/common, distinguished/vulgar – adjectives which often function as couples.

(Bourdieu, 2005a: 36)

Symbolic systems of classification allow what Bourdieu qualifies as 'objective' elements (i.e. one's resources, identity and life-styles) to be effectively 'apprehended symbolically, in a relationship of knowledge or, more precisely, of misrecognition and recognition', and, as I argued earlier, 'presupposes the intervention of the habitus, as a socially constituted cognitive capacity' (Bourdieu, 1986: 47). Symbolic categories act as a practical tools – 'implicit, tacit, very hard to make explicit' – 'which make it possible to organize the world..., [and are] yet deeply rooted in thought and even in the body' (Bourdieu, 2005a: 36). Systems of symbols and perceptions through categories assure the distinction of individuals and of their specific lifestyle, and serve to situate people in the social order by attributing distinct values to their capitals and dispositions.

Moreover, people are situated in an array of not only socially desirable, acceptable or unsuitable, but also rewarding or disqualifying practices, through which they embrace or oppose the doxa of the field. Their social position in the symbolic order is therefore reproduced through two complementary dynamics: firstly, the transcription of symbolic values into schemes of recognition and reward, and secondly into the reproduction of distinctive schemes of representation and action (habitus).

First of all, symbolic values inscribed in a doxa, and across doxas, define who is (bound to be) poor or rich both literally and figuratively, and associate them with different levels of merit and opportunities within and across fields. For example, ballet dancers and opera singers have been recognised, estimated and entitled better than hip-hoppers and rappers in the field of art, even if this equilibrium evolves. The doxa of the field dictates the resources or dispositions that are more or less appropriate, and which not only guarantee people's opportunities to function, but also shape the structure of the field. Then, 'differences function as distinctive signs and as signs of distinction' (Bourdieu, 1989: 20).

Secondly, the position of an individual depends on the symbolic and relative appreciation of people's relative practices, and of their representations of the world. Habitus, as schemes of perception and schemes of action, enables people to endorse a situated doxa and to think and act in harmony with their position in the symbolic classification of their life-styles:

habitus produces practices and representations which are available for classification, which are objectively differentiated; [and, which] are immediately perceived as such only by those agents who possess the code, the classificatory schemes necessary to understand their social meaning. Habitus thus implies a 'sense of one's place' but also a 'sense of the place of others'.

(Bourdieu, 1989: 19)

Agents therefore embody symbolic structures. 'In reality, agents are both classified and classifiers, but they classify according to (or depending upon) their position within classifications' (Bourdieu, 1987: 2).

Bourdieu's sociology is of great importance for understanding firstly the structural dynamics behind what Stewart (2002) called horizontal and vertical inequalities. Horizontal inequalities, such as ethnicity, race, gender and age, are continuously converted into and feed vertical inequalities, such as the unequal distribution of resources, disposition, capability and functionings. This occurs through surreptitious symbolic norms of appreciation that judge one's attributes and situate them in the social order not according

to people's desires, but according to the biased recognition of the dispositions of the well-off. Effectively, for Bourdieu, inequalities in the social sphere are due to two entangled (subjective and objective) dynamics.

In other words, the space of objective differences (with regard to economic and cultural capital) finds an expression in a symbolic space of visible distinctions, of distinctive signs which are so many symbols of distinction.

(Bourdieu, 1987: 11)

The subjective appreciation of people's characteristics (e.g. the disregard that someone may have for others' identity, tastes and dispositions and their relative mistreatment) are likely to entrench objective differences (or vertical inequalities) into a social hierarchy of recognition and disentanglement within and across fields. According to Bourdieu, such a process is dual:

the perception of the social world is the product of a double structuring: on the objective side, it is socially structured because the properties attributed to agents or institutions present themselves in combinations that have very unequal probabilities... On the subjective side, it is structured because the schemes of perception and appreciation, especially those inscribed in language itself, express the state of relation of symbolic power. ... Together, these two mechanisms act to produce a common world, a world of common sense or, at least, a minimum consensus on the social world.

(Bourdieu, 1989: 20)

Bourdieu thus envisions poverty and inequalities as a relative position of disadvantage reproduced over time through the objective structures and subjective interpretation of the social order, and its ongoing reproduction through processes of unequal recognition and relative entitlement.

Moreover, Bourdieu uncovers another dimension of the social reproduction through the exercise of symbolic violence. Dominant groups stand on the prized side of symbolic categories: they are rich, intelligent, educated, and so on. Symbolic violence allows them to acquire authority and legitimacy, constituting another form of capital: their symbolic capital. This capital is 'the form the different types of capital take once they are perceived and recognized as legitimate' (Bourdieu, 1987: 4). Symbolic capital combines information

regarding the quantity and nature of capitals one possesses, with the value that the society attributes to them within a field and across fields, and in relation to one's position and habitus.

According to Bourdieu, the cultural value of one's set of resources and dispositions, translated into symbolic capital, confers not only a social status upon individuals, but also a particular form of power. Symbolic capital orders 'the distribution of the various forms of capital, [according to] the distribution of the properties which are active within the universe under study – those properties capable of conferring strength, power and consequently profit on their holder' (Bourdieu, 1987: 3-4). Therefore, the cultural schemes of appreciation and action related to a field, delineate power relations within and across fields: they set relations of dominance and prevailing status games. '[S]ymbolic capital [is effectively] constituted when specific forms of economic, social, or cultural capital are recognized as legitimate bases for claiming prestige, respect, and/or authority within a given field' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). It represents 'collectively understood status games whose legitimating criteria are formally and informally codified' (Üstüner and Thompson, 2012: 797).

Through their symbolic capital, the well-off can maintain their position by legitimating the symbolic system that advantages them. As a form of symbolic violence, dominating individuals promote their tastes and dispositions as 'naturally' and 'intrinsically' superior. Their practice is categorized in terms of 'sophisticated', 'refined' and 'legitimate' tastes within a highly stratified symbolic universe. Other alternatives are then qualified as 'vulgar', 'coarse' and 'servile' – e.g. taste for the opera, the museum of modern art in contrast with taste for popular culture, watching television, etc. This process leads to the adoption of a dominant and consensual system of perception of what is 'legitimate' that cements the society and maintains the social advantage (recognition and rewards) of the well-off. For those that possess a greater symbolic prestige, it constitutes

the opportunity to 'appropriat[e to themselves the] profits and the power to impose the laws of functioning of the field most favourable to capital and its reproduction' (Bourdieu, 1986: 49). According to Bourdieu, such social mechanisms push actors of the society to reinforce their social position and corresponding symbolic powers, hence, the social reproduction of inequalities. Symbolic power consists in emphasising the place and distance between individuals of different status, and in imposing dominant categories of perception of the world. Individuals with a low symbolic value are unnoticeably reminded of, and maintained in their social position:

It is this sense of one's place which, in a situation of interaction, prompts those whom we call in French *les gens humbles* literally "humble people" – perhaps "common folks" in English – to remain "humbly" in their place, and which prompts the others to "keep their distance," or to "keep their station in life." It should be said in passing that these strategies may be totally unconscious and take the form of what we commonly call timidity or arrogance.

(Bourdieu, 1987: 5)

Therefore, people with a privileged position within a field and across fields, endowed with a corresponding symbolic power, exert a surreptitious symbolic violence over the others, as 'an unperceived form of everyday violence' (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1991: 112).

Symbolic domination acts as a multifaceted process in which subordinate groups are meant to accept prevailing status hierarchies and the naturalized privileges of those who occupy dominant positions in the socioeconomic hierarchy. Bourdieu (1990, 51) clarifies that it is an act of complicity rather than passivity: 'all symbolic domination presupposes on the part of those who submit to it, a form of complicity which is neither a passive complicity to external constraint nor a free adherence to values.' Those subjected to symbolic domination are socialized to accept a prevailing set of social conditions, standards, ideals, and constraints as a natural and self-evident system of beliefs. The adoption of these beliefs inhibits them from realising the confluence of historical contingences that have placed them in a particular social faction. As a result, members of

subordinated groups tend to acquiesce consensually to power relationships and modes of authority.

When you ask a sample of individuals what are the main factors of achievement at school, the further you go down the social scale the more they believe in natural talent or gifts - the more they believe that those who are successful are naturally endowed with intellectual capacities. And the more they accept their own exclusion, the more they believe they are stupid.

(Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1991: 114)

People's belief in the stake and the genuineness of the rules of the game of their field in which they are involved – i.e. their *illusio* – leads them either to conform as much as possible with the ideal of the field, hence to compete for better recognition and social position, or to assent to the rules of social distinction that legitimate and lead them to accept their 'social domination'. Both options reinforce their *illusio* and the rules of the game of the field (Bourdieu, 2005a: 36). Most social structures are maintained through a social *status-quo*: 'The structure of the field, i.e. the unequal distribution of capital, is the source of the specific effects of capital, i.e. the appropriation of profits and the power to impose the laws of functioning of the field most favourable to capital and its reproduction' (Bourdieu, 1986: 49).

Bourdieu believes that '[w]ith the mechanism of symbolic violence, domination tends to take the form of a more effective, and in this sense more brutal, means of oppression. Consider contemporary societies in which the violence has become soft, invisible' (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1991: 115). Consequently, the most disadvantaged would be less likely to struggle against the social order.

3.2.4. The expansion of the liberal market doxa

Bourdieu makes sense of the prominence of the liberal market doxa in the process of entitlement of individuals. He sketches an understanding of the extension of a liberal market doxa to other fields.

For Bourdieu, and echoing Polanyi, the ‘market field’⁴⁶, like any other field, is historically constructed.⁴⁷ According to Bourdieu the market field and its doxa emerged through an historical process of differentiation, and through a symbolic revolution. The field became autonomous, steering as well as legitimating the opportunity to create profit. It is formed around a ‘nomos’, i.e. an autonomous universe ‘obeying to its own laws’ (Bourdieu, 2005a: 32) of maximisation of individual profit. Yet, for Bourdieu, this corresponds to a cultural process, that of the extension of a liberal doxa that self-justifies itself through practices. Therefore, Bourdieu (1977a) argues that one’s propensity to make sense and use the rationality of markets is not natural, but is built and transmitted in a thorough socio-historical, collective and individual process. In western(ised) societies, the diffusion of its nomos in different social spheres transformed practices and slowly imposed its schemes of apprehension of the world and of recognition of capital according to the profit they are associated with. Bourdieu illustrates his point through the dissonance that actors socialised in France faced when they returned to Kabyle. Their ‘mental structures’ shaped within a liberal society were in disharmony with local ‘objective structures’, such

⁴⁶ For Bourdieu, the expansion of the liberal doxa of exchange constitutes the dominant nomos not only of the market, but also of the economic field. In his work, he refers interchangeably to the economic and the market field to refer to the field constructed around the legitimation of the maximisation of individual profit, and organised around relations of economic production. For him, each of its subfields may for example ‘correspond to an ‘industry’, understood as a set of firms competing to produce and commercialize a homogeneous category of products’ (Bourdieu, 2003: 91), yet they are ‘unified’ through the ‘imposition of the absolute rule of the free exchange’ (Bourdieu, 2003: 89).

In this thesis, I will distinguish the market field from the economic field. I consider the former as the dominant subfield of the latter. I therefore consider the economic field as the sphere in which the rules of the economy in its substantive definition are negotiated, ruling the legitimacy, spaces and occurrence of the different forms of exchange – i.e. understood as market, reciprocity, redistribution and householding.

⁴⁷ For Polanyi, the economic life promoted by the market society is ‘entirely unnatural’, it’s an exceptional creation created by 19th thinkers. However, economic history revealed a ‘conscious and often violent intervention on the part of government which imposed the market organization on society for noneconomic ends’ (Polanyi, 1944: 249-50) as being an exceptional and irremediable movement.

Yet, contrarily to Bourdieu, Polanyi focuses in on the expansion of markets as ‘evil’ institutions that would intrinsically influence ‘every aspect of social life and the countermovement of regulation to restrain what he sees as their essentially destructive nature. His focus is therefore on markets as instituted economic processes’ (Harvey and Metcalfe, 2004), while for Bourdieu, markets correspond to a doxa, ‘mental structures’ and therefore a field of a dynamic and changing nature and influence.

as the formal forbiddance of the cost-benefit analysis, which maintain and condition the joint propriety attached to the notion of clan, family or community (Bourdieu, 1977a: 30). The market doxa increasingly regulates other autonomous fields as, for example, the journalistic or the social scientific field (Bourdieu, 2005a). Law and politics complementarily promoted the embeddedness of the economy guaranteeing one's entitlement, e.g. through property laws.

As a consequence of the expansion of such nomos in the definition and delimitation of the market field, and despite the 'desocialised and dehistoricised' roots of the theory that promotes it ⁴⁸, practices that constitute the field 'have today more than ever, the means of *making itself true* and empirically verifiable'. Bourdieu (1998: 95) explains that its actual doxa (i.e. the legitimate practices and interpretation of how profit should be made and rewarded) of the

neoliberal discourse is not just one discourse among many. Rather, it is a "strong discourse" (...) it has on its side all of the forces of a world of relations of forces, a world that it contributes to making what it is. It does this most notably by orienting the economic choices of those who dominate economic relationships. It thus adds its own symbolic force to these relations of forces.

Consequently, Bourdieu denounced the fact that 'the constitution of a science of mercantile relationships (...) has prevented the constitution of a general science of the

⁴⁸ Bourdieu (2005b: 5) argues that economic rules of the games are acquired by historical dispositions, contrary to the 'illusion of the ahistorical universality of the categories and concepts employed by [the economic] science'. The naturalization of its nomos in neoliberal theories is based on the denial of this process and through 'a pure mathematical fiction', 'founded on a formidable abstraction'. The strength of this nomos, that is

the maximisation of individual profit, (...) has been turned into a model of rationality. (...) In the name of a narrow and strict conception of rationality as individual rationality, it brackets the economic and social conditions of rational orientations and the economic and social structures that are the condition of their application.

(Bourdieu, 1998)

It grants the field with a great power of representation as well as influence over the understanding of exchanges.

economy of practices, which would treat mercantile exchange as a particular case of exchange in all its forms.’⁴⁹ He argued for the creation of

A general science of the economy of practices, capable of reappropriating the totality of the practices which, although objectively economic, are not and cannot be socially recognized as economic, and which can be performed only at the cost of a whole labor of dissimulation or, more precisely, *euphemization*.

Therefore, this science ‘must endeavour to grasp capital and profit in all their forms and to establish the laws whereby the different types of capital (or power, which amounts to the same thing) change into one another’ (Bourdieu, 1986: 47).

3.2.5. Bourdieu’s vs. Polanyi’s understanding of the economy

Bourdieu’s call for a science of the economy of practices converges with Polanyi’s adoption of what he called a substantive definition of the economy – i.e. the analysis of systems of production, circulation and exchange – in opposition to its formal definition – i.e. reducing exchange and the economy to profit-making exchanges. Yet, Bourdieu’s sociological approach presents advantages for addressing gaps left open in Polanyi’s approach.

(Bueno, 2015) argues that Polanyi has the tendency, among other ‘major social thinkers of the 19th and 20th century – from Hegel to Marx, from Simmel to Habermas’, to see ‘the development of the modern economy (...) as resulting in its detachment and

⁴⁹ Bourdieu (1986: 47) claims:

Economic theory has allowed to be foisted upon it a definition of the economy of practices which is the historical invention of capitalism; and by reducing the universe of exchanges to mercantile exchange, which is objectively and subjectively oriented toward the maximization of profit, i.e., (economically) self-interested, it has implicitly defined the other forms of exchange as noneconomic, and therefore disinterested. In particular, it defines as disinterested those forms of exchange which ensure the transubstantiation whereby the most material types of capital—those which are economic in the restricted sense – can present themselves in the immaterial form of cultural capital or social capital and vice versa.

hostility in relation to fundamental structures of (social) life'. Therefore, 'the totality of economic relations would consist in, or at least appear to be, an autonomous domain operating on its own terms.' Bourdieu's approach allows us to bypass this biased perspective and to make sense of

the relationship between life and economy in a more immanent manner, thus indicating a possible replacement of the idea of 'the economy' – as a self-contained domain – by the notion of 'the economical'. In this perspective, economic relations are not to be regarded as a system standing above life, but as a reality performed and reproduced through makeshift interactions or practices.

(Bueno, 2015)

Polanyi thought of market exchanges as disembedded and disembedding society from social norms.⁵⁰ Given his lack of an evaluative framework, Polanyi overlooked the influence of the the markets over cultural norms and social power relations and inversely, f cultural norms and power relation over the negotiation of the use of the form.⁵¹ On the one hand, Hillenkamp et al. (2013: 11) remarks:

Polanyi generally ignored the possibility of emancipation through the market, for example when selling their own products on the market allows poor women to escape patriarchal domination or allows members of cooperatives to overcome dependency upon NGOs (e.g. market driven cooperatives in South Brazil studied by Lemaître). Therefore, a neo-Polanyian framework for a

⁵⁰ Polanyi highlighted the difference between trade and markets. The great difference he asserted is the dis-embeddedness of markets, noting the role of the social norms in trade, but without pondering the social influence or positive impact of market exchanges.

Yet, he did not describe trade in terms of institutional and behavioural patterns following the definition of the other forms. Polanyi regards trade as the historical socially embedded form of market, dependent on institutions but not designed for the sake of barter and gain. Therefore, he noted its entanglement with other forms of exchange. Trade is embedded into social institutions and 'not necessarily organized in terms of monetary exchange: it can also be organized as a gift relationship in reciprocal relationships or be administered from above in redistributive systems (1982: 40-45)' (Jessop, 2001: 2).

⁵¹ Therefore, it is not clear in Polanyi's writing whether it is the socio-political use of markets exchanges, the specific social norms which frame the use of the form (such as his distinction between markets and trade suggests), or the nature of markets as a specific form of exchange that (dis)embed society. Polanyi's misunderstanding of the relation between forms of exchange and social norms led him to ignore discussing to what extent 'historically, the meanings and norms that have served to embed markets [rather than the property of the form itself] have often been hierarchical and exclusionary' (Fraser, 2013: 50).

realistic analysis of [actual structures of exchange such as in the] solidarity economy should carefully distinguish between different types of interdependence from the point of view of domination and emancipation.

I therefore propose to re-adopt, through Bourdieusian tools, a Weberian (1978: Chapter VI) understanding of markets as ‘way to make society’, independently of a morally inclined rejection of the form.

On the other hand, adopting an interpretation conforming to Bourdieu’s sociology, Servet (2007: 262, my translation) explains that exchanges

should not be understood (... as) abstract structures that science discloses, or as simplified representation of reality. Those have to be understood as precepts, ideals or systems of justification that organise human societies (...) [They should be understood as underlying] beliefs that occidental societies have incorporated to the point of turning them into dogmas.

The liberal doxa of exchange not only rules the market field, but also the recognition of other practices of exchange in the wider economic field. Those practices are for example evaluated through their economic sustainability, as a norm that will condition further entitlements. As a dominant doxa, it suggests that we need to question the socio-cultural value attributed to the different forms of exchange as symbolically charged structures, as they structure people’s unequal recognition and entitlement, and the reproduction of relative and specific forms of deprivation and inequalities.

Finally, Polanyi himself recognised that the effect of social structures on exchanges (and vice versa) does not depend only on the specific forms of exchange he identified. Two elements influence not only the adoption of forms of exchange, but also the nature of their social impact. Firstly, there are the complex social norms regarding exchanges and the elements involved in them – the objects or services, interlocutors, etc. – that the account of the doxa of the field addresses. Secondly, there are the forms of power they relay, which one’s symbolic capital concentrates. Consequently, Polanyi fails for example to explain the contradictory role of the state in its involvement with welfare redistribution and market exchanges. Polanyi (1944: 53) effectively noted that different states used redistribution

according to different socio-cultural norms of ruling and interacting with civilians, modifying greatly their social outcome:

We find, as a rule, the process of redistribution forming part of the prevailing political regime, whether it be that of tribe, city-state, despotism, or feudalism of cattle or land. The production and distribution of goods is organized in the main through collection, storage, and redistribution, the pattern being focused on the chief, the temple, the despot, or the lord. Since the relations of the leading group to the led are different according to the foundation on which political power rests, the principle of redistribution will involve individual motives as different as the voluntary sharing of the game by hunters and the dread of punishment which urges the *fellaheen* to deliver his taxes in kind.

Polanyi (1944: 52-3) argues, for example, that he

deliberately disregarded (...) the vital distinction between homogeneous and stratified societies, i.e., societies which are on the whole socially unified, and such as are split into rulers and ruled. Though the relative status of slaves and masters may be worlds apart from that of the free and equal members of some hunting tribes, and, consequently, motives in the two societies will differ widely, the organization of the economic system may still be based on the same principles, though accompanied by very different culture traits, according to the very different human relations with which the economic system is intertwined.

Therefore, Polanyi overlooks the insertion of exchanges within complex social contexts of power inequalities. If this prevented him from explaining the distinctive impact of different forms of exchange according to the social context, a Bourdieusian approach would address this gap.

3.3. The unequal game of negotiation of one's entitlement

Beyond explaining the symbolic and procedural structures that maintain the reproduction of the social order, Bourdieu makes sense of the action of individuals and groups (i.e. their agency) through the concept of social struggles. He explains how people are able to negotiate their social position and their entitlement in a continuous movement of redefinition of social structures. Individuals and groups' ability to negotiate the social structures of their entitlement therefore are significant to account comprehensively for their unequal levels and sets of capabilities. Those struggles are inscribed in and shape fields.

Nonetheless, the dominant position of the political field and of the state over defining people's levels of recognition and entitlement across fields, Bourdieu argues, echoes Fraser's (1996) focus on the politics of recognition.

3.3.1. Social struggles

Agents 'are endlessly occupied in the negotiation of their own identity' (Bourdieu, 1989: 21). Yet, according to Bourdieu, social mechanisms push actors to reinforce their social positions and corresponding symbolic powers, hence, the social reproduction of inequalities. This implies maintaining continuous conflicts between individuals, over their position of social distinction, i.e. their symbolic advantage, which is mainly ruled by the symbolic domination they may exert.

Consequently, social struggles inscribed within fields are crucial in order to account for people's space of disempowerment.⁵² Fields appear as

dynamic sites of struggle as social actors, who have less favorable distributions of capital, mobilize to reshape or subvert the rules of the game in ways that are more favorable to their relative positions (Bourdieu 1990, 2003).

(Üstüner and Thompson, 2012: 799).

Hence, the society is divided into 'fields of force' or 'fields of power', between and inside which individuals exert power relations to improve their relative social position and to modify the structure of social inequalities. Fields are a battlefield in which agents' symbolic power influence their redefinition or application of the rules of the game. According to Bourdieu (1987: 13-4),

What is at stake in symbolic struggles is the imposition of the legitimate vision of the social world and of its divisions, that is to say, symbolic power as

⁵² Similarly, due to one's position in fields, one's habitus not only results from one's particular trajectory, but also echoes collective trajectories and social struggles.

worldmaking power (...)[:] power to impose and to inculcate principles of construction of reality, and particularly to preserve or transform established principles of union and separation, of association and disassociation already at work in the social world such as current classifications in matters of gender, age, ethnicity, region or nation, that is, essentially, power over words used to describe groups or the institutions which represent them.

Not only individuals' but also groups' struggles matter in the negotiation of one's advantage. Groups institute practices and representations of the world within fields, which in turn, institute fields, groups and define their symbolic influence:

Symbolic power, whose form par excellence is the power to make groups and to consecrate or institute them (in particular through rites of institution, the paradigm here being marriage), consists in the power to make something exist in the objectified, public, formal state which only previously existed in an implicit state.

(Bourdieu, 1987: 13)

Inserted into particular fields, groups can be defined in a Bourdieusian approach⁵³ as 'collectives having an economic and social base be they occupational groups or 'classes', [which] are symbolic constructions oriented by the pursuit of individual and collective interests'⁵⁴ (Bourdieu, 1987: 9-10). As a consequence of this, social groups emerge as an interrelational process of representation:

a 'class', be it social, sexual, ethnic, or otherwise, exists when there are agents capable of imposing themselves, as authorized to speak and to act officially in its place and in its name, upon those who, by recognizing themselves in these plenipotentiaries, by recognizing them as endowed with full power to speak and act in their name, recognize themselves as members of the class, and in doing so, confer upon it the only form of existence a group can possess.

(Bourdieu, 1987: 15)

⁵³ The interrelational and doxatic definition of social groups lead many authors, as for example Crossley (Crossley, 2003: 45), to claim that 'Bourdieu's theory of practice provides a very strong basis for analysing and understanding social movements [and] the nature of social movements'.

⁵⁴ Bourdieu aims here to give a wider definition to groups than the notion of class, yet believing that its definition applies to what is called 'social classes'. Moreover, consistent with his approach of the symbolic endowment of some individuals for the definition of the rules and the stake of the game, Bourdieu clarifies in parenthesis at the end of this quote that 'the pursuit of individual and collective interests' is 'first of all, by the pursuit of the specific interests of their spokespersons'.

People's different agency over the structure represents a form of collective and individual power in Bourdieu's sociology.

3.3.2. The expansion of one's capabilities

Bourdieu identifies two ways to influence the symbolic order and one's symbolic entitlement: by changing the interpretation of one's position according to settled categories and by changing categories of representation. Therefore,

Symbolic struggles over the perception of the social world may take two different forms. On the objective side, one may act by actions of representation, individual or collective, meant to display and to throw into relief certain realities...; and, on the individual level, of all the strategies of presentation of self, so well analysed by Goffman, that are designed to manipulate one's self-image and especially – something that Goffman overlooked – the image of one's position in social space. On the subjective side, one may act by trying to transform categories of perception and appreciation of the social world, the cognitive and evaluative structures through which it is constructed.

(Bourdieu, 1989: 20)

Social struggles are pursued in order to improve the symbolic position of an actor and therefore to obtain further individual entitlements and capabilities, yet their impact over social inequalities may differ according to one's position.

Firstly, an individual (or a group) may acquire further capitals or functionings through an involvement in or the creation of fields that would valorise their position. In such situations, people account for the symbolic structures already in place without challenging them. Individuals thus are taking a 'structural or positional stance' over their objective status. However, many encounter difficulties in accessing further resources or developing further functionings in a society in which the unequal repartition of resources and opportunities is set in practices and doxas, which reproduce the social order. If such a strategy can lift someone out of poverty (social ascension), it would not change the symbolic system shaping social inequalities (within and between fields) that would still operate and produce similar spaces of poverty/disempowerment.

Secondly, struggles may represent the prospect of negotiating the rules of the games through which one's identity, opportunities and choices are at stake.⁵⁵ One may conserve or acquire a better position through power to reproduce (structural power) or/and to change (strategic power) institutions and rules which frame the subjective interpretation of one's status. Bourdieu's account of powers recognises the power over the definition of rules of the game within fields. As a consequence of such renegotiation of the rules of the game, 'the relative value of the different species of capital, (...) is continually being brought into question, reassessed, through struggles aimed at inflating or deflating the value of one or the other type of capital' (Bourdieu, 1987: 9-10). Therefore, one's empowerment may pass through structural and/or through subjective renegotiations.

3.3.3. The limits of social struggles

Social struggles (and agency) as described by Bourdieu, are limited in three different ways: they are relative to one's symbolic position and participation in the social order, they tend to improve, if not maintain, people's relative advantage in a competitive way, and they are framed by the arbitration of the state.

Firstly, dominating doxa and norms of entitlement cannot be easily challenged. They are maintained by the fact that 'depending on their position in social space, that is, in the distributions of the various species of capital, the agents involved in this struggle are very unequally armed in the fight to impose their truth, and have very different and even opposed aims' (Bourdieu, 1987: 11). Unequal individual capabilities situate people in the social order and shape their power to influence the structure of their disempowerment.

⁵⁵ However, as Crossley (Crossley, 2003: 44) reminds us, 'revolutionising the rules of the game' can appear itself to be a more or less explicit rule of specific fields: '“revolt” is a common feature of some fields: e.g. the artistic field, wherein successive generations reject the (surface-level) forms and criteria of their predecessors, striving to establish their own as superior and authoritative’.

Moreover, the set of beliefs inherent to their membership and active participation in a field imply all members' adhesion to the doxa, and limits their possibility to be strategic or to dispute its arbitrariness.⁵⁶ Yet, relative to that point, Bourdieu relatively overlooks the upward mobility experienced by many; he may be accused of presenting a determinist theory.

Secondly, in social struggles, players try to renegotiate the symbolic appreciation of their identity in order to increase their stakes, and to gain more power and social recognition – and this, says Bourdieu, to the detriment of others. However, Bourdieu underestimates how people come together to pursue such endeavour as a positive collective capability, or as a form of reciprocal exchange. For him, competition between actors drives all social changes, and uncompetitive exchanges correspond to extraordinary settings:

Where [a collegial exchange] happens, it is the exception based on what Aristotle called 'philia' – or friendship, to use a more general expression. 'Philia' is, according to Aristotle, an economic exchange or symbolic exchange that you may have within the family, among parents or with friends. I tend to think that the structure of most of the fields, most of the social games, is such that competition – a struggle for domination – is quasi-inevitable. It is evident in the economic field; but even in the religious field, you will find the description is right. In most fields, we may observe what we characterize as competition for accumulation of different forms of capital (religious capital, economic capital and so on).

(Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1991: 116)

Bourdieu is thus trapped in an understanding of society that re-endorses a 'market-like' competitive understanding of social relations in which individuals will try to increase their 'social' or 'power' profit. He tends to minimize peaceful spaces of reciprocal collaboration in exchanges, which Polanyi has categorised in opposition to market exchanges. He

⁵⁶ Bourdieu (1977b: 169) has developed an 'outline of a theory of 'crisis'' (Crossley, 2003: 44) that discusses people's lack of consciousness of doxas, as an important limit of their ability to develop game-changing struggles. He also explains 'crisis' as necessary momentums in which social struggles may arise. Such theory, not be developed here, shed light on the (lack of) emergence of social movements.

therefore re-endorses the tendency to perceive only actors as competitors, as a bias carried by liberal economics, from which he however wished to depart. Bourdieu, echoing Polanyi, however highlighted the opposition between the domestic and traditional worlds – characterized by his denigration of the economy – and what he called the market field.

Echoing those two points, Schor et al. (2014: 5-6) summarized a common

resistance from scholars [to Bourdieu's sociology] for being overly structural, and as a result, static (Gartman, 1991). A Bourdieusian field resembles a war of position – with a well-defined structure, but lack of movement. While Bourdieu believes fields can be de-stabilized, the literature contains few studies of transformations in the underlying binaries of taste (for an exception, see Carfagna et al., 2014). Critics have also argued that Bourdieu's account is overly economic, and pays insufficient attention to the role of cultural negotiation in the dynamics of fields (Beckert, 2010).

Finally, the state plays a particular role in structuring groups' struggles and legitimacy, by ruling how they 'confront each other within a closed, relatively autonomous field, namely, the field of politics' (Bourdieu, 1987: 14). Within this field, the state and its representatives act with a 'monopoly over legitimate symbolic violence. (...) Or, more, precisely, the state is a referee, albeit a powerful one in struggles over this monopoly' (Bourdieu, 1989: 22). Consequently, the state 'produces the official classification', or 'produces and imposes the categories that we apply spontaneously to everything in the world, and to the state itself' (Bourdieu, 1989: 22). Grenfell and James (2004: 513) also argues that government intervention can 'change a field of knowledge by the imposition of definitions of legitimacy and there-grounding of institutional relations, and thus structures'. The political field regulates the legitimacy and power of representation of each group within fields or of each sub-field. The state as the central 'bank of symbolic capital guaranteeing all acts of authority' highly influences (the struggles over) the rules of the game and the definition of the symbolic categories of appreciation of groups, which in turn frame their opportunities, choices and entitlements (Wacquant, 2004: 8). Considering the state's role for defining one's empowerment echoes not only Sen's, but Fraser's (1996) focus on the politics of recognition. Fraser et al.'s (2004) effectively argue that social

justice is an intertwined matter in which political representation affects economic rewards and cultural recognition. However, Bourdieu's sociology shows that the negotiation of the politics of recognition may be limited since:

the thematic issues raised in public discourse are the tip of an iceberg with respect to legitimation. Beneath this level, supporting it, is a much deeper and broader level of unspoken and pre-reflective or 'doxic' assumptions and practices which allow political society to function.

(Crossley, 2003: 46)

3.3.4. Groups and social structures in Sen vs. Bourdieu

Bourdieu's account of the relative powers of the state and of social struggles in negotiating one's empowerment allows us to revisit Sen's CA. On the one hand, Sen and Bourdieu share a certain common belief in the importance of groups for modifying social structures. Both authors agree on the fact that 'the public is an active participant in change, rather than (...) a passive and docile recipient of instructions of dispensed assistance' (Sen, 1999: 281). The strategic power identified by Bourdieu, seems to correspond to Sen's advocacy for a progressive and collective denunciation of 'diagnosable injustices'. However, Bourdieu stresses that one's social struggle is relative to one's position in the social order and tends to improve, if not maintain, one's relative advantage in a competitive way. Therefore, Bourdieu tends to reject the idea that we may be able to achieve impartiality. The fight against social injustices (in terms of capability deprivation) is likely to be the action of those they concern, and to encounter resistance from the others. Bourdieu reminds us of the complex dynamics and effects that power relations may induce for social changes. Changes, even when they are democratic in the sense of being unanimously adopted, rely on a complex structure of symbolic domination and may lead to more entrenched inequalities or to the reduction of people's capabilities.

On the other hand, through accounting for social struggles and symbolic power relations, Bourdieu offers a critical view of the relation between freedom of choice and

agency. The freedom to function is the opportunity and choice shaped by social structures: the fields, their relative importance, and their rules of recognition and entitlements. However, those are themselves shaped by the agents' symbolic and social struggles. A person's capabilities and values are therefore relative to their relation to objective and symbolic structures of entitlement, and to their negotiation. With a Bourdieusian understanding, the notions of freedom of choice and agency converge: people's opportunities to be and do what they value are not only guaranteed by effective structures of (dis)empowerment, but also echoes their level of control over the former. Freedom is related to the possibility of developing preferences out of habit, and to realise preferential functionings. One's control over his environment comes to whether one understands the position and entitlement obtainable through different fields, or the struggle that can be pursued against such arbitrariness. Yet, people's unequal levels of symbolic power in social struggles matter in accounting for the different opportunity to influence the further acquisition of resources and functionings, which may deepen the reproduction of social inequalities. The different levels of agency that people exert (e.g. through exchanges) therefore may matter in the reproduction of their unequal capabilities. In conformity, for Bourdieu, 'freedom is not a property that falls from the sky; it has degrees, which depend on the position occupied in the social games' (2005a: 44). One's freedom of choice corresponds to the complex relation between the passive acceptance and the levelled negotiation of the social structure in which one operates. By accounting for the complex dynamic in which people acquire different abilities to negotiate their opportunities to be and do, Bourdieu shows how the two aspects of freedom (process and opportunity) developed by Sen are enmeshed, and makes sense of Sen's account of the different forms

of agency.⁵⁷ Agency, structure and capabilities appear therefore as the three different facets of the same reality.

As a monist sociologist, Bourdieu regards individual freedom as both constrained and guaranteed by social structures with which one interacts. His sociology introduces a continuum between subjective and objective realities, and between social action and social changes. This translates into a particular ontological statement that goes beyond sociology's traditional boundaries described under the terms structuralism and methodological individualism, but that encompasses the study of the dynamics between structures and agency – i.e. a monist approach. The symbolic struggle over the definition of the rules of the game is a crucial issue in the reproduction of social advantages, and thus in the social – rather than individualistic – fight against poverty and inequalities. Defining legitimate and illegitimate practices or resources and their treatment within the different fields of society are particularly at stake for the fight against systems producing inequalities. It is thus of real significance for contextualising the evolution of the distribution of capabilities beyond individuals' social ascension, and for furthering the debate on assessing, designing and implementing development policy that aims to widen the potential set of capabilities of disadvantaged sections of the population.

To merge Bourdieu's monist sociology with Sen's concern for people's capabilities, we need to enquire into the daily latent and invisible structured and structuring processes of the production of inequalities. I argue that the focus on exchanges and their distinctive characteristics that Polanyi has initiated, has the potential to do so. Social exchanges are the main interrelational structures, connecting individuals and enabling the 'subjective' treatment of 'objective' identities, resources, objects, functions, etc. Therefore, I maintain

⁵⁷See Table 4, p.51

that exchanges are at the heart of people's unequal sets of opportunities. As Mauss highlighted, exchanges are 'total social facts', they 'can be understood in a dynamic that reflects the coherent relation between the overall aspects of the social reality (legal, economic, political, domestic, religious, aesthetic, morphological and so on)' (Mauss, 1966: 76-7). They are connecting individuals to social structures:

Exchanges are twofold, offering 'reality criteria' articulating social relations and cultural systems, as well as a 'reality advantage' turning these aspects into a concrete system that 'link the social and the individual on the one hand, and the physical (or physiological) and the psychical on the other.

(Lévi-Strauss, 1987: 28)

Similarly to capabilities, exchanges are at the interface between structuring elements, as social processes and patterned interactions, at the same time as they are constructed elements with which we interfere and negotiate. They also represent the opportunity to act, to be recognised and to access further resources that are key to shaping one's capabilities. They may be approached as 'total social facts' since they may explain the objective and subjective, the structures and agency dynamics behind the definition of one's capabilities.

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Bourdieu's sociology addresses the gaps left after the combination of Sen's evaluative framework and Polanyi's understanding of exchanges. For Bourdieu, social structures arise from a twofold movement of constructivism and structuralism.⁵⁸

By structuralism or structuralist, I mean that there exist, within the social world itself and not only within symbolic systems (language, myths, etc.), objective

⁵⁸ Consequently, Bourdieu described his work as being a 'constructivist structuralism or structuralism constructivism' (Bourdieu, 1989: 14).

structures independent of the consciousness and will of agents, which are capable of guiding and constraining their practices or their representations. By constructivism, I mean that there is a twofold social genesis, on the one hand of the schemes of perception, thought, and action which are constitutive of what I call habitus, and on the other hand of social structures, and particularly of what I call fields and of groups, notably those we ordinarily call social classes.

(Bourdieu, 1989: 14).

It can be concluded that people's unequal capabilities are at the interplay between agency and structures, and result from the objective repartition of individual resources, along with the subjective doxic rules to access symbolic capital. They can moreover be seen to play a part in the reproduction of the unequal social order. Bourdieu's sociology leads us to think of people's capabilities not only as a neutral and positive element to promote per se, but also as a space that echoes and structures conflicts of power, which therefore become a concern for social justice.

Consequently, combining Bourdieu's sociology with Sen and Polanyi's framework paves the way for going beyond only listing the social circumstances (or contingencies) that deprive people from acquiring capabilities. It allows an understanding of the social dynamics shaping and shaped by social exchanges and their mediation of capabilities. The next chapters explore the empirical implementation of this conceptual framework in order to account for the forms of exchange and interrelated capabilities developed by poor social groups in Brazil.

Chapter 4. Methodology and methods

Understanding the ‘exchange - capability’ relation requires a sociological enquiry that uses an in-depth qualitative methodology. The thesis departs from the economic and statistical approaches to capabilities that have been developed so far, and anchors the study of substantive economy in a clear social and moral matter. The chapter argues that adopting a case study method and focusing on particular groups of exchange allows this. It discusses the strengths and weaknesses of adapting this conceptual framework to an empirical focus on forms of exchange and their relation with members’ capabilities, in four groups of the neighbourhood of the ‘Old Algados’, in Salvador de Bahia (Brazil). Moreover, it aims to present a comprehensive account of the process of data collection and analysis.

Firstly, the chapter introduces the focus and research design, which constitutes an intrinsic sociological and qualitative inquiry. Secondly, it considers the strengths of adopting a case study approach. Thirdly, it explains the selection of the site and of the cases of this empirical research. Fourthly, it discusses the design of the data collection. Fifthly, it presents further practical aspects of the investigation and data collection. Finally, it discusses the processes of data analysis.

4.1. Focus and research design

The thesis aims to draw out an empirical understanding of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation. It argues that the conceptual framework, combining Sen with Bourdieu and Polanyi, has the potential to depart from the economic and statistical approaches to capabilities that have been developed so far, offering a sociological perspective that is

empirically grounded. To put it another way, it aims to gain a deep qualitative understanding of people's effective and unequal empowerment through practice, and of how their daily exchanges shape what people achieve (and may aim to achieve). It constitutes a sociological enquiry that is based on an in-depth qualitative methodology.

4.1.1. Previous accounts of capabilities

Sen's capability approach (CA) departs from the moral and political space of evaluation of social justice offered by previous institutional approaches in order to assess 'the advantages and disadvantages of a person'. He demonstrates that capabilities illustrate better the entrenchment of one's disadvantage than resources, and stresses the importance of people's opportunities and freedom of choice.

Yet, how to understand and account for people's capabilities represents a first hermeneutical challenge. Such a question is inscribed in a larger methodological debate, which illustrates the difficult operationalization of the CA. Policy-makers' difficulties in implementing the approach, echo the challenges which academics experience when it comes to identify (at least) people's sets of opportunity and choice to be and do, and their individual or collective features. Previous methodological accounts of capabilities have been dominated by economists and philosophers (Lessmann and Bartelheimer, 2015), yet the influence of sociologists is growing.

Some researchers have opted for a quantitative (statistical) assessment of people's effective capabilities and their evolution. They aimed to trace the global characteristics and evolution of people's empowerment. Many quantitative frameworks were created as for example, the Human Development Index (HDI) (Fukuda-Parr, 2003), or the Alkire-Foster Multidimensional Poverty Index (Alkire and Foster, 2007; Alkire and Foster, 2011). Sociological knowledge played an indirect role in such endeavours, since '[n]ot only are multidimensional views [of poverty and inequalities] increasingly common, but analysts

and policy makers are more prepared to accept the inconclusiveness of partial orderings of multidimensional distributions' (Bourguignon, 2006: 101). Effectively,

Sociological research has mainly influenced the debate by providing cross-sectional and longitudinal micro data for analyses that permit the construction of social indicators that go beyond income and economic factors. (...) By combining the capability approach with these other discussions the conception squarely places individual wellbeing in the context of societal developments without deviating from ethical individualism.

(Lessmann and Bartelheimer, 2015)

Yet, when apprehended quantitatively, methodological discussions turned around listing capabilities and giving weight to their importance, legitimacy and 'social value' (Grusky and Kanbur, 2006: 29) for 'human development'. The work of economists evolved simultaneously with the normative analysis of philosophers regarding indexing capabilities that matter and need to be protected (e.g. Nussbaum, 2000b). Economists have followed such philosophical accounts (e.g. Anand et al., 2005), or proposed to account for particular indexes of capabilities, which they claim to be universal (e.g. Alkire, 2002; 2008a; Alkire and Black, 1997) or especially adapted – e.g. Robeyns' (2003b) work on the analysis of gender inequalities in western societies. However, many discuss the social values naturally conveyed in indexes of capabilities (Khader, 2009; Nussbaum, 2000a), vis-à-vis the soundness and limits of Sen's decision that the choice of functionings and capabilities that matter should be left open.

Later and in parallel, the CA has resonated with the recent ethical engagement in promoting self-determination and relaying local values. Anand and Sen (1997) acknowledged that participatory methods are the principal processes by which evaluative issues should be resolved. They should pool opinions regarding what people value to be and do in order to assess the gap with what they achieve, as a measure of their effective wellbeing freedom. Therefore, '[a] variety of participatory tools have been developed, where the outsider (researcher or practitioner) is perceived as a facilitator who encourages and enables local people to express their own reality' (Frediani, 2007: 7). From a

methodological point of view, the CA has gained from social sciences techniques of investigation. Doing so, the approach has offered and promoted a new way to inform and influence local policy-makers. Nonetheless, participatory approaches and contextualised accounts have given way to a more qualitative understanding of capabilities and of their intrinsic relation to cultural settings and groups. It has fed critiques regarding the concept of capability as an individual property and new theoretical developments enquiring into the sociological roots of people's 'adaptive preference', relative to their 'precariousness' (Lessmann and Bartelheimer, 2015), 'capability to aspire' (Sarojini Hart, 2013) or the collective and social nature of capabilities. Yet, the use of participative techniques has revived the purpose of indexing and reporting at what people value being and doing, and eventually of how their achievements have progressed over time. Despite introducing new theoretical approaches challenging Sen's conception of the nature of capabilities, such recent development has not yet led to the elaboration of a clear methodological approach of capabilities has a distinct sociological matter, but is still largely inscribed in a statistical and philosophical discussion.

4.1.2. Research questions and conceptual framework

This research echoes the latest analysis regarding the individual/collective nature of capabilities and adaptive preferences, and contributes to the CA within this line of work. However, it directly poses the question of capabilities as a (monist) social object defined in the interplay between social structures and people's agency. To do so, the research considers capabilities as the object of a qualitative sociological inquiry and focuses particularly on the dynamics behind people's unequal empowerment in capabilities. It is

particularly concerned with understanding the role of exchanges⁵⁹ in this process. The main research question is:

How do forms of exchange contribute to people's empowerment in capabilities?

By forms of exchange, I mean recurring patterns of social interaction and distribution that structure our daily practices across social fields. The study enquires about the social distribution to individual's opportunities and choices to be or do what they reason that particular forms of exchange will offer. To put it another way, it investigates how recurring patterns of social interaction and distribution that structure our daily social and individual practices, modulate people's unequal freedom and opportunities to be and do what they value, i.e. their effective capabilities. To address the main question, the research first needs to enquire into:

What are the characteristics of forms of exchange? Can forms of exchange be associated with people's empowerment in capabilities?

In categorizing forms of exchange, I use Polanyi's distinction of the 'forms of integration' – developed in his book *The Great Transformation* (1944) – as a combination of institutional and behavioural patterns of interaction established between individuals.

The study aims to build a sound understanding of the forms of exchange, namely, capabilities relations that can be observed. A Bourdieusian approach allows us to consider how exchanges, but also capabilities, operate in a complex interaction with social structures [i.e. processes of (capital) reconversion and symbolic recognition] and with people's unequal agency [i.e. individual and collective ability to 'struggle']. Consequently,

⁵⁹ In the following analysis chapters, I use the term 'exchanges' to refer to (undetermined patterns of) interactions. It encompasses socio-cultural, structural and agency dynamics beyond the use of particular forms of exchange. By contrast, I use the term 'forms of exchange' to refer to specific forms of interactions as distinctive and coherent combinations of (procedural, behavioural and managerial) patterns, which description will be the central object of the first data analysis section.

the thesis considers capabilities as the result of a structural and agency dynamics mediated through exchange and shaping one's unequal opportunities. It invites us to consider exchanges as social processes shaped by the symbolic appreciation of different identities, life-styles and relative objects and matters, and processes of reconversion of people's resources. Moreover, it encourages accounting for the different participation of agents in over legitimate rules of exchanges as rules of recognition and rewards likely to modify one's level of capability. Bourdieu moreover allows us to understand institutions as legitimate actors of fields and struggles, or as fields themselves (e.g. the state in the political field or the markets), which independent yet 'hierarchized' mottos influence such processes.

The research poses the following sub-research questions, concerned with the agency and the structural aspects of the empowerment which exchange may enable and be object of, and which may structure people's unequal sets and levels of capabilities. Regarding the structural level of such relation, the research will enquire into:

To what extent do forms of exchange structure people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities?

Regarding the level of agency that people may exert over the 'exchange - capability' relation, the research will enquire into:

To what extent can people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities be associated with their agency over exchanges?

Polanyi, Sen, and Bourdieu, have only responded partially to the research questions. Furthermore, the three theorists have neither phrased nor attempted to understand the role of exchanges in the distribution of social disadvantages in society. Consequently, they miss informing us systematically about the 'exchange - capability' relation. This motivates the empirical research of this thesis. Nonetheless, I have argued so far that their contributions

to building a combined conceptual framework provide a robust base for addressing this gap and tackling the research question.

4.1.3. A anthropological and sociological qualitative enquiry

This research directly poses the question of capabilities as a (monist) social object defined particularly through its relation to exchanges. Understanding the ‘exchange - capability’ relation, as a space in which social structures and people’s agency may interfere, represents a sociological enquiry that appeals for an in-depth qualitative methodology.

Adopting a sociological approach in this research departs from the statistic and moral accounts developed earlier by economists and philosophers. The appropriateness of an empirical qualitative study also corresponds to the willingness to obtain a different insight on the matters of exchanges and capability distribution, particularly distinct from institutional and quantitative approaches. The incommensurability of exchanges and capabilities, and their complex relation also leads to the choice of a qualitative method.⁶⁰ ‘The explanatory power (...) richness and depth of information [qualitative research] generates’ is prioritized over the ‘descriptive, analytical breath of coverage’ offered by quantitative research. It allows me ‘to explain the difference’ which forms of exchange bring in terms of capabilities, reflecting on the division of the social sphere as composed of multiple ‘social interactions’ and ‘interpretations of realities’ (Holland and Campbell, 2005: 5).

⁶⁰ These aspects are evoked here out of others, which would later consolidate the arguments for this choice: the contextual application of the framework, the focus on individual experience, etc.

This approach translates a new monist epistemology of the complex dynamics that shape people's capabilities, and of what is development. It does not propose an ethical or technical discussion of the implementation of the CA, despite the fact that its findings may feed such discussion. Yet, the focus on capabilities still encompasses denouncing social inequalities as a moral concern. However, such ambitions are put to a second plan, since its first purpose is to gain a deep qualitative understanding of how people's daily exchanges shape their effective empowerment through practice. It does not entail a judgement of the different qualities, weight or importance of capabilities, unless noticing whether they play a particular role in building one's freedom to be and do through exchanges. Therefore, I will only refer to the capabilities that arise from (or are prevented by) particular exchanges. In line with Frediani (2007: 9), 'instead of separating collective and individual *capabilities*, this research [will] explore the collective and individual *features* [of capability sets from exchanges] that constitute people's (...) freedoms' (emphasis in text). Therefore, this study tries to make sense of the diversity of exchanges which may affect the continuity between collective and individual capabilities.

Moreover, in order to draw an in-depth scrutiny of exchanges and to reveal the objectives and symbolic specificities of the 'exchange - capability' relation in situated fields and doxas, the thesis has first developed a categorisation of forms of exchange and of the extent to which they structure particular forms of empowerment (i.e. mediating specific and unequal capabilities). It first investigates the 'structural' analogies between exchanges – i.e. according to their particular and regular patterns - and people's sets of capabilities. Therefore, the study endorses, both a structural anthropology⁶¹ enterprise and

⁶¹ Structuralism was first defined as a project of anthropology by Lévi-Strauss in *Tristes Tropiques* (1961: 160), in which he wrote:

a concern for understanding its complex integration into social (read cultural) and agency dynamics in the analysis of exchanges and their interaction with people's capabilities. Exchanges, as 'total social facts' (Mauss, 1966: 76-7), are approached not only as elements connecting individuals to social and power structures⁶², but also as limited elementary customs informing the diversity of social systems and to a certain extent, the diversity of social structures of empowerment.

Yet, those structures are not the only thought to influence the relation, and the study aims to uncovering its sociological and agency variations. Therefore, this thesis considers the 'exchange - capability' relation as the dynamic and variable outcome of people's dynamic involvement in exchanges, that are socially defined systems of forms of exchange, themselves likely to be negotiated by society and by individuals in society. Besides, it gives importance to the fact that agents have capabilities and not just ineptitudes or vulnerabilities⁶³, and that they develop their capabilities in function of different forms of opportunities. It therefore considers capabilities as the result of complex structural, social, and agency dynamics, understood through an anthropological and sociological qualitative research design.

'The ensemble of a people's customs has always its particular style; they form into systems. I am convinced that the number of these systems is not unlimited and that human societies, like individual human beings [...], never create absolutely: all they can do is to choose certain combinations from a repertory of ideas which it should be possible to reconstitute. For this one must make an inventory of all the customs which have been observed by oneself or others, the customs pictured in [tales or dreams] (...), one could eventually establish a sort of periodical chart of chemical elements (...). In this, all customs, whether real or merely possible, would be grouped by families, and all that would remain for us to do would be to recognize those which societies had, in point of feet, adopted'.

⁶² See section 3.3.4, p.112

⁶³ As Hillenkamp et al. (2013: 3) noted, 'the idea that actors from the popular economy have capabilities, and not just vulnerabilities, has received increasing recognition in policy-making during the past 30 years (Scott, 1985; Anderson and Woodrow, 1989/98; Cannon, 2008).'

4.2. Case study: methodological considerations

This section argues that to carry out such sociological and qualitative research design, a case study approach is most suitable. It discusses the strengths of such an approach and exposes the different methodological considerations in the definition of the unit of analysis and of the case studies.

4.2.1. Why case studies?

This research adopts a case study approach, which ‘is especially appropriate in new topic areas’ and because ‘little is known about the phenomenon’ (M. Eisenhardt, 1989: 532), that is, the ‘exchange - capability’ relation. Moreover, according to Yin (2003), a case study design is especially adapted in the four particular cases developed below, which are relevant in this research.

Case studies are appropriate (i) when it is impossible to manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study, (ii) when contextual conditions are relevant or (iii) when exploring the relation between the context and the phenomenon under study. The research aims to explore the relation and the extent to which contextual conditions influence the ‘exchange - capability’ relation, through inquiring into the relation between the phenomenon, social structures and one’s agency. Moreover, I follow Flyvbjerg (2006 223) in his statement that

in the study of human affairs, there appears to exist only context dependent knowledge, which, thus, presently rules out the possibility of epistemic theoretical construction. (...) Social science has not succeeded in producing general, context-independent theory and, thus, has in the final instance nothing else to offer than concrete, context-dependent knowledge. And the case study is especially well suited to produce this knowledge.

Finally, case studies are appropriate (iv) when adopting an explanatory study. The central question of this research phrases the explanatory ambition of the project with a

'how' [*How do forms of exchange contribute to people's empowerment in capabilities?*].

As Stake (1978: 7) adds,

[c]ase studies are (...) useful for exploration for those who search for explanatory laws. (...) because of their compatibility with [an empirical and contextual] understanding, case studies can be expected to continue to have an epistemological advantage over other inquiry methods as a basis for naturalistic generalization.

Therefore, and as in the case of this research, he perceives case studies to be pertinent in order to generate theory.

4.2.2. Groups of exchange as unit of analysis

The next methodological challenge was to define at which level to understand and observe exchanges and the 'exchange - capability' relation⁶⁴ in order to select the case studies, that is, the unit of analysis of the research. Not all capabilities may be guaranteed by persistent, ongoing or habitual exchanges. Rather, some capabilities may be the result of the processes of mutual recognition⁶⁵ present in any relation of acquaintance. Those have been for example subjects of the study of social stigma, as developed by Goffman (1963), and their analysis would be coherent with a Bourdieusian understanding of habitus as

⁶⁴ I do not believe that face-to-face exchanges are the only element behind the structure of one's capabilities. Medias and technologies (e.g. books, internet, TV) may also be a way to access resources or to further exchanges (e.g. peer-to-peer experiences enabled by internet) that will shape one's opportunities, choices and values. Books bring an important cultural capital and their possession is in itself recognised by Bourdieu as a great cultural capital that may influence one's opportunity to function. However, they are embedded into rules and norms of exchange, which regulate people's access to such resources. Access to books for example results from markets, gifts, or loans from libraries. Those may support or result from the (un)equal empowerment through exchanges that this thesis aims to uncover. It confirms the main argument of this thesis.

Also, new spaces of innovations of reciprocal exchanges have opened up with technologies such as the internet. We can evoke many peer-to-peer projects such as for example, Freecycle – dealing with sustainable consumption –, Prosper – offering finance services –, or Couch Surfing – offering alternative hostelling. This thesis will however focus on exchanges initiated and pursued through a physical rather than a virtual presence.

⁶⁵ Processes of mutual recognition such as described in section 3.2.1, p.88

embodied structures in constant as much as in ephemeral contexts. Yet, the time needed for empirically investigating the quality of such relation, and to make sense of and compare different patterns of such ephemeral exchanges, would represent a methodological challenge. It seems equally difficult to trace the effect on people's capabilities of spontaneous and superficial interactions. Focusing on groups whose activity represent stable, and therefore relatively institutionalised ⁶⁶ exchange practices, constitutes a methodological decision, which aims to ease the observation of the dynamics shaping capabilities through (never anecdotal) exchanges. Also, group members may already have gained an empirical understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of what may result from their ongoing practices of exchanges, as an accessible knowledge for the researcher.

The study investigates the 'exchange - capability' relation that takes place in groups, taken as the unit of analysis. The definition of groups adopted converges on the one offered by (Stewart, 2004: 2) as 'ways of categorising people in ways that represent common affiliations or identities', but which however consider practices of exchanges as a complementary dimension of the definition. Therefore,

this affiliations [and exchange practices] may be more or less strong – i.e. matter more or less to members; may be more or less defined; may be more or less enduring – some may be very temporary (e.g. people going on a jointly organised outing) while others (such as families, ethnicities, race) may be more or less strong, though the importance of the connection may vary over the person's life.

(Stewart, 2004: 2)

Groups are units in which people maintain relatively consistent practices of exchanges, and entities that make sense of and support practices of exchange. The strong possibility of

⁶⁶ The term 'institution' is used in this thesis according to its sociological meaning as well-established and structured patterns of relationship, rather than in its legal and administrative meaning.

‘mapping’ exchanges within those groups allows for studying their dynamics and impact on an individual’s capabilities.

Rather than identified at the level of sectors of the economy or types of institutions, exchanges are considered between defined group actors. An exchange, represented by the arrow in the following figure, is observed between members and thought to be shaped within groups, themselves influenced by the fields in which they are inserted:

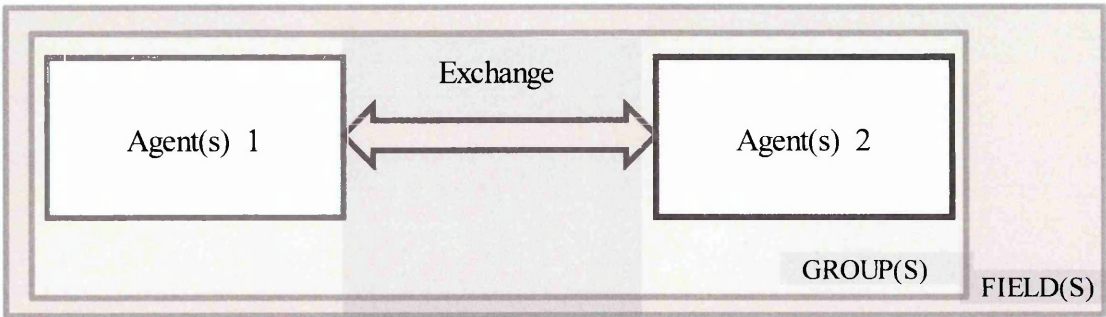


FIGURE 6: REPRESENTATION OF THE FOCUS ON EXCHANGES

As a consequence of this choice, the study firstly avoids the unlikely association of sectors of the economy or types of institutions with forms of exchange beyond evolving social norms. Secondly, it permits the observation of the plural and combined use of distinct forms of exchange within such units for the full realisation of practices of exchanges. The focus on groups allows us to make sense not only of the complexity of exchanges, but also of the diverse dynamics of empowerment within groups. However, the choice of such a unit of analysis introduces a certain bias. It overlooks the further involvement of members in exchanges outside the groups studied and the capabilities they acquire through those. It overlooks some complex elements (such as the extent to which one’s choice is involved in different exchanges or groups) in their disempowering experience.

Groups of exchanges, as units of analysis, represent the physical limits of the “bounded system[s]’ (to use Louis Smith's term)’ (Stake, 1978: 7) that case study requires.

Therefore, if the definition of units of analysis is of great importance for the design of case study approaches, the criteria of selection of case studies is strategic. As Gerring (2004: 341) stated, 'the case study method is correctly understood as a particular way of defining cases, not a way of analysing cases or a way of modelling causal relations'. I will argue in the two following sections, that an 'information-oriented selection' of multiple cases, would satisfy the focus on the diversity of the different exchanges required by the research question, and on the co-variational aspect of the 'forms of exchange - capability' relation. Among the different strategies of selection of cases, an 'information-oriented selection' means a selection which aims to 'maximize the utility of information from small samples and single cases. Cases are selected on the basis of expectations about their information content'. Such selection is done according to a 'maximum variation' between cases, in order this time 'to obtain information about the significance of various circumstances for case process and outcome' (Flyvbjerg, 2006 230).

4.2.3. Multiple forms of exchange, multiple cases study

The choice of case according to the forms of exchange they support does not intend to be representative of the practices of the population, but aims to reflect the diverse opportunities of exchange available. I therefore propose to focus on identifying the diversity of the forms of exchange through the social spaces in which they may appear. To do so, and in the absence of a literature that offers a framework with a better empirical substantiation, the association of the Polanyian categorisation of exchanges with institutional sectors of the economy (which this study otherwise aims to depart from) is taken as '[a] priori specification of constructs[, which] help to shape the initial design of theory-building research. Although this type of specification is not common in theory-building studies to date, it is valuable because it permits researchers to measure constructs more accurately' (M. Eisenhardt, 1989: 536). Thus, we build on, but also question

carefully, the association made between substantive forms of the economy, understood as market, reciprocity, redistribution and householding, and the different sectors of the economy, generally conceived today through the polarisation between the market and the third-sector.

Polanyi tends to think of the market as a form of exchange associated with institutions designed for its function only (Polanyi, 1944: 56). Bourdieu has however explained that the formal definition of the economy is restrictive, corresponds to the neo-liberal nomos ‘of maximisation of individual profit’ and to the doxa of ‘imposi[ng] the absolute rule of the free exchange’ (Bourdieu, 2003: 89) of the market field.⁶⁷ The sector is easily identified as a privileged sector to observe the market as a form of exchange. In addition, the third-sector has been identified as an independent field guided by doxas that value private and non-profit-making exchanges, and as the field in which we shall observe the resurgence of non-market exchanges⁶⁸.

Adopting case studies issued from the market and the third-sector give the possibility, re-endorsing a ‘neo-Polanyian framework’, of observing ‘the four principles of economic integration identified by Karl Polanyi – market, redistribution, reciprocity and householding – when understood as modalities of interdependence’ (Hillenkamp et al., 2013: 5). I propose to adopt a number of cases relative to the number of forms of exchange observed in the different sectors in order to gather enough information to understand each of them: a case from the market-sector to cover the relative exchange, and three cases from the third-sector in which we aim to observe householding, redistribution and reciprocity.

⁶⁷See section 3.2.4, p.100

⁶⁸ See section 2.1.4, p.36

The selection of three cases within the third-sector represents, alongside the opportunity to observe different non-market forms of exchange, the prospect of scanning the diversity of the sector. Effectively, the diversity of forms of exchange (or of their use) is associated with the diversity of the exchange practices of the third-sector. The study gains from the selection of cases according to a ‘maximum variation’ criteria (this is in contrast to the market-sector case). We are then confronted with the wide definition of the third-sector and the numerous concepts, experiences and actors that it encompasses. Its composition is complex to grasp.

To do so, I have explored the literature, in order to identify its diverse conceptual categorisations, social purposes, legal or informal appearances, in order to map the sub-fields/categories of groups that compose the field.⁶⁹ Mapping the third-sector has been necessary in order to make sense of the possible array of case-study choices, and to anticipate their characteristics. The rich literature focusing on the third-sector, emerged in developing, but also in developed countries, and discussed across the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Lusophone academic publications, has been contributing to the renewed interest in the ‘social economy’, the ‘human economy’, and the ‘solidarity economy’, herein referred to as the third-sector.⁷⁰ Yet, most academic research reflects on

⁶⁹ To understand a sub-field means to identify structured practices of exchanges – or socially normed patterns of relationships, as more often stated in interactionist studies based on Bourdieu – rather than ‘pre-determined categories’ (Eyben, 2009). Yet, this poses diverse challenges since:

Bourdieu did not identify the scope and scale of fields; ‘the boundaries of the field can only be determined by empirical investigation’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 100). (...) This conceptual flexibility reflects that the analysis of a field is less about defining sociocultural boundaries than thinking relationally and structurally: that is, mapping out the network of relations that position social actors in a given, historically shaped field of power and status competitions over valued forms of capital (Swartz 1997).

(Üstüner and Thompson, 2012: 799)

⁷⁰ Utting et al. (2014) have for example discussed the many definitions associated with the third sector.

the organisation of a specific social domain⁷¹ or specific categories or institutional forms of exchange (such as solidarity finance or cooperatives) and debates the nature of their organisation and values (for example democratic, solidary, reciprocal, profitable), or their empowering prospects (emancipation, social protection and self-determination).

As the main criteria for selection of case studies, I adopted the diversity in terms of the social aims of groups of exchange (i.e. illustrated mainly by the diversity of their fields and organisations), independently from a normative consideration of the capabilities that matter.⁷² I engaged in a discussion over the selection of a set of cases from the third-sector before my empirical investigation. Yet, confronted with lack of any analysis that focuses on making sense of the variation in the use of forms of exchange in the third-sector, I left the assessment of their ‘wider diversity’ and maximum variation opened to further empirical observation. I will therefore discuss the (non-representative) processes of selection and make explicit the criteria I used for this methodological decision.

The normative framework built to analyse the ‘exchange - capability’ relation also has the virtue of anchoring the study of substantive economy with a clear social and moral matter. I argue here that the selection of cases according to the diversity of their social enterprise serves to understand this co-variational aspect of the ‘forms of exchange - capability’ relation. It allows the examination of the similarities and differences between varying cases. For Yin (2003: 47), having multiple case studies can be useful when either

⁷¹ The third sector may operate in main social domains such as: Provision of basic services (Health, Housing), Finance, Advocacy and right, Research and education, Religion, Environment, Social services, Youth, Culture and arts, Leisure and sports.

⁷² I had thought a good combination could have been to focus on a political, an economic and a religious organisation. As a political group, I had in mind an independent group of the ‘movimento dos sem teto’: an organisation that pressures the government to build decent dwellings for the poorest populations, while occupying land and organising settlements. As an economic group, I had already identified the Camapet Cooperative as a potential case. Finally, as a religious group, I had the self-sustainable Comunidade da Trindade, led by a catholic monk, which gathers around 30 ex-rough sleepers. Those had extra interesting elements, such as their proximity with questions of poverty and empowerment, which I will not discuss here.

one ‘(a) predicts similar results (a literal replication) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication)’, and in order to challenge such predictions. The goal of the selection was to allow comparisons of the features of the relation between forms of exchange and capabilities across cases, since the case studies have been selected according to their diversity. It contributes to building a rich cross-analysis of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation across cases (if not within cases), and to questioning the comparative advantage, if any, of each form in terms of the empowerment they allow. A theoretical replication of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation is expected here, and should bring forth elements of explanations when this relation varies.

Literal replication (i.e. confirmation through comparisons of the structure of the forms of exchange themselves) has not been expected, since each case was thought to constitute an essential source of knowledge of each forms of exchange. Yet, since different forms of exchange have eventually been observed in different groups, the multiple case-study approach adopted here has finally offered confirmation of the categorisation of the forms of exchange elaborated. Moreover, the wealth of the data gathered has consolidated the confirmability of the data.

4.3. Site and case studies

This section defends the methodological choices involved in the implementation of the case study approach and more specially the choice to focus on Brazil, and on the neighbourhood of the Old-Alagados in Salvador as a particular site of empirical investigation. It also discusses the selection of four local groups of exchanges taken as the case studies.

4.3.1. Why Brazil?

As argued earlier, this thesis focuses on the relation ‘exchange - capability’ as an immanent process of development happening in all societies, and not just a social, economical and political situations of countries, whether qualified as developed or in development. Politics and the state may however act as structures that influence the degree and nature of such immanent changes. The political context of Brazil has also led to the choice of the country as a particularly pertinent site to investigate the immanent relationship between exchanges and capabilities. Three historical converging factors in the country justify focus of this study on Brazil: they are thought to create a particularly informative period, which not only facilitate the observation of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation, but also echo the rationale of this research through its focus on poverty and inequalities. The ongoing process of democratisation, that is the expansion of people’s freedom to be and do, as political and social freedoms, have progressed simultaneously with the commitment of the government to fight against and reduce poverty and inequalities and with the liberalisation and the development of social experiences of the third-sector. Moreover, the country represents an interesting case for the study of social inequalities, through a focus on exchanges.

AN INTRIGUING CORRELATION

Up to the 1990s and in conformity with dominant concepts of development, the organisation of society in general had not been analysed with a concern for resolving and understanding people’s (dis)empowerment. It has however been pursued by liberal theorists to assess the possible flexibility and resilience of labour relations. Liberal theorists therefore justified the economic role of the informal sector, thought to reinforce and regulate growth, and to absorb the surplus in the workforce during an economic crisis (Lautier, 2004). In Brazil, the adoption of the Washington consensus in the 1990s, reinforcing the elitist governance inherited from the dictatorship, has left a great part of the

population marginalised from the state project of development. The longstanding socio-political ‘insignificance’ of informal and poor sections of the population has prompted the creation of many casual, ‘creative’ interpersonal bonds and social organisations as an alternative to the formal market and of state redistribution from which its population was excluded.⁷³ Informal social activities and communitarian bonds were tolerated, when not ignored (their micro-scale did not constitute a threat toward the safeguarded organisation of the most powerful part of the population) or prohibited (such as unionist groups, or practices associated with the AfroBrazilian heritage, such as Candomblé community, the practice of Capoeira, and so on).

In parallel, the process of re-democratisation of this country initiated in the 1990s counterbalanced the repression of the dictatorship and the liberal project that favoured dominant sections of the society. The improvements associated with the guarantee of the freedom of association were witnessed in Brazil through the fervent dynamism and fast growth of its third-sector – which has also been strengthened with support from international NGOs (Landim, 2008). Between 1996 and 2005, the number of private

⁷³ The director of the SETRE-SESOL has for example offered an interesting description of this period:

We lived here (...) a process of depreciation of labour. To simplify labour relations was said necessary for the country to develop. [This happened] at the time of the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso [1995-2003]. Then, the idea that it was necessary to deregulate, facilitate contracting was heavily diffused. At that time, Brazil had a large amount of informal employment, which increased greatly because the state began to encourage this kind of informal hiring or the creation of other forms of employment that ignored the previous law. (...)

So, [formal] hiring for a part of the society, and the other and poorest part of the population was informal. (...) The formal work give access to various rights: social insurance, paid vacations, 13th salary. (...) All these social gains (...) instead of being considered as capital by increasing the income of the population – thus increasing their purchasing power– was considered an additional expense for the company. (...) [The employers] were seduced by this idea, that if they cut worker's right, their business will be stronger. (...)

This produced some social setbacks. Therefore, formal work is also a necessity as the ILO itself states for a sustainable economic development.

[Gov.1]

foundations and non-profit associations grew by 215.1% (Estatística, 2008: 59), a majority of which focused on the defence of rights and on lobbying for the interest of the population. Simultaneously, the political system has been radically transformed to deliver policies by and for the entire society, rather than for the dominant elite only.⁷⁴ In this ongoing evolution, the government has slowly departed from previous approaches that have for a long time ignored the fate of the worst-off sections of the society in the pursuit of growth. Lately and more particularly during Lula's presidency, the state renewed its social project: development policies became more concerned with inequalities and poverty. This change echoed a shift in Latin America's political landscape. Consequently and since 2001, the country experienced a sharp and continuous decline in poverty⁷⁵, accomplished early the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to reduce by half the proportion of population living in extreme poverty⁷⁶, and reduced its level of inequalities⁷⁷. A buoyant debate tries to determine the source(s) of this change. As one may expect, most of the studies on poverty and inequalities have focused on the impact of the market, state redistribution and their combination. Most authors attribute it to the 'positive growth' and the new conditional cash transfers (See for example Beghin, 2008; Ferreira et al., 2007; Herrán, 2005; Lopez-Calva and Lustig, 2009; Soares et al., 2007).

⁷⁴ '[T]he post-dictatorship Constitution of 1988, (...) provided for public participation in policy control and management through associative organisations at the municipal, state and national levels' (Landim, 2008: 7).

⁷⁵ Brazil's 'definition of households as living in extreme poverty, where per capita income is one-quarter of the minimum wage, and of poor households as those with a per capita income of 50 per cent of the minimum wage. (...) Between April 2004 and March 2009, 4.8 million Brazilians passed beyond the poverty line, reducing the proportion of poor people in the six principal metropolitan regions by more than 28 percent, from 42.7 percent to 30.7 percent' (Gledhill and Hita, 2009: 3-4).

⁷⁶ Brazil witnessed the reduction of the poverty rate from 25.6% in 1990 to 4.8% in 2008 according to the standard of the World Bank (1\$ per day). (World-Bank, 2012)

⁷⁷ The 'year-on-year declines in the Gini index since 2004, [is] a product both of rising incomes at the bottom deciles of the social pyramid and modest declines at the top. (...) The Gini coefficient of inequalities in income distribution in Brazil was 0.604 in the early years of the 1990s, falling to (...) 0.534 for 2007 (IBGE, 2008)' (Gledhill and Hita, 2009: 6).

Moreover, despite the decrease of poverty, Brazil still represents an extreme case for the study of social inequalities. It still presents a sharp problem of unequal distribution, often illustrated through the unequal distribution of economic resources. As one of the 'emergent' BRICSs, Brazil's increasing growth now places the country as the world's sixth largest economy. However, despite being included in the 'upper-middle-income economies' (World-Bank, 2012), the economic boom does not reach equally the overall population. Brazil is among the most unequal countries in the world with a Gini index of 54.7 (2014), higher than China and India. Brazil has a much higher proportion of poor people in comparison to countries with a similar GDP⁷⁸ per capita (Barros et al., 2010; Sgard, 2003). This situation has led many authors to highlight Brazil's exceptional case of inequalities, categorising it well above the world average.⁷⁹ It is clear that in Brazil, '[h]igh levels of poverty are a result of the unequal distribution of available resources, not from their scarcity [as] there are enough resources to substantially alleviate poverty and extreme poverty' (Barros et al., 2009: 3). Social processes of discrimination and reproduction of social disparities are still prominent in Brazilian society. Brazilian poor and disadvantaged people have a particular profile, being mainly young, black and women⁸⁰, and they constitute particular communities within the society.

⁷⁸ Countries with comparable GDP per capita have an average proportion of poor people only around 10%. Brazil however counts 27.6 % of poor in its population according to the World Bank headcounts ratio at 4\$ a day (PPP). In comparison, Serbia ranked just before Brazil in 2010 according to their GDP per capita (respectively 75th -11.349 and 76th country- 11.210) counted only 8.34% of poor (similarly according to the World Bank headcounts ratio at 4\$ a day (PPP)).

⁷⁹ 'In 2007, the income shares of Brazil's poorest 50% and richest 1% were nearly the same. In addition, the income share of the richest 10% represented over 40% of Brazil's total income, while the share of the poorest 40% was less than 10% of the total income. (...) around 90% of countries have less concentrated income distributions than Brazil has' (Barros et al., 2009: 7).

⁸⁰ 37% of the poor are less than 16 years old and 50% less than 25 years old. 65% of poor people are Afro-descendent while they represent only 46% of the population, 43% of the black people are under the poverty threshold compared to only 20% of the white people (Lovell, 2000; UN-Women, 2006).

The high correlation between the decrease of poverty and inequalities and the emergence of the third-sector was left unexplored. It has however been assumed that

In a country with an authoritarian state and culture, and weak autonomous civil society, this universe of associative organisations set up in the past 30 years has certainly contributed to the construction of participatory, democratic institutions and designs committed to reducing political and juridical hierarchies and thus the differences of opportunity connected with them.

(Landim, 2008: 13)

The population out of reach of political projects and organised around many informal self-help groups constitute now, with the re-democratisation of the country, a lively laboratory of the wealth of the third-sector. Lemaitre and Helmsing (2012: 760) argue, through the example of Solidarity Economy, that the revival of the third-sector 'represents a new institutional path for poor neighbourhoods, which in the past used to be far removed from any public existence'. Gaiger (2007: 313) highlights that the originality of the Brazilian case, beyond the wealth of initiatives, consists in the 'networking of these initiatives and a pre-existing popular economy through new intermediaries (trade unions, non-governmental organizations, universities, etc.) involved in technical support as in the interpellation of government' (my translation).

During the last decade, the socialist government has not only legitimized and promoted the emergence of the third-sector, but also its role in the fight against poverty and inequalities. Because of the deep ties between the third-sector and poor sections of society, working with actors of the third-sector and integrating their claims has represented a great step for the Brazilian government in recognising first, specific identities such as non-white people (afro-descendent and indigenous populations) or women, situations of poverty such as homelessness, and economic informality, and second, alternative organisations of the society such as cooperatives, self-help or communitarian groups.

The focus on Brazil serves the purpose of the study at two levels. Firstly, it resonates with the question of the relation between the increase of freedoms, the increase of alternative forms of exchange offered by the third-sector, and the decrease of poverty and (eventually or not) inequalities. The advent of these changes in Brazil (re-democratisation of society, the recognition and emergence of the third-sector and the fight against poverty) represents a particular moment of interest, which echoes the rationale behind this research. This study is born from the ambition to improve social policies that can build on and enhance immanent forms of empowerment for the poorest sections of the population. Therefore, an auxiliary question that feeds into the research project arises: *how have groups of the most disadvantaged sections of the society benefited from and taken advantage of their new political and social freedom to develop, create or revive practices of exchange in the third-sector that have contributed to their empowerment?* Yet, such research does not pretend to address the question directly. The political recognition of and intervention toward groups of the third-sector, in association with the fight against poverty and inequalities, constitute a trigger for the research accentuated by the ‘rare event’, or ‘instance of substantial and relatively quick change in (...) variable[s] of theoretical interest’ (Gerring, 2004: 351).

The context and the new policies of Brazil indicate the gap in knowledge that this thesis tries to close: they make sense neither of the forms of exchange in which poor people are involved nor of the empowerment they may mediate. They valorise the social bonds within poor groups through an unclear but optimistic appraisal of what is associated with their solidarity and reciprocity and their form of self-empowerment. Such policies gain legitimacy through their approximation to Sen’s CA, the human development paradigm of the UNDP and the Polanyian appraisal of institutional sectors developmental outcomes. Looking at Brazil appears pertinent for confronting the limits of such approaches. Secondly, it represents an extreme case of social inequalities, which can serve

to help us to understand better the social factors that influence inequalities, and the complex political, economic and social dynamics structuring (capability) inequalities to which exchanges may give form.

Therefore, the case of Brazil is an interesting case that echoes the aims of this research as well as actual concerns of development regarding ways in which to fight poverty and inequalities. Even if it will be necessary to complement this study with similar empirical investigations from other countries, the focus on Brazil represents a pertinent instrumental choice in the sense defined by Baxter and Jack (2008: 549): it is used to

provide insight into an issue' *beyond 'understanding a particular situation.* (...) The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, and because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest.

The focus on Brazil aims to establish the validity of the research question. It is of interest for drawing an empirical understanding of the 'exchange - capability' relation, and for enquiring about the use of exchanges in the third-sector. Since

the objective is to achieve the greatest possible amount of information on a given problem or phenomenon, a representative case or a random sample may not be the most appropriate strategy. This is because the typical or average case is often not the richest in information. Atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied.

(Flyvbjerg, 2006 229)

Yet, as a consequence of this choice, and despite similar trends in Latin America in terms of the rise of the third-sector and the fight against and decrease of poverty, the case does not aim to be typical of other cases (Stake, 1995).

4.3.2. The choice of the site

Salvador is the capital of Bahia, one of the states of the Northeast region of Brazil. While this region of Brazil is known for the higher concentration of poverty and

inequalities in the country along with the Northern region, the state of Bahia has been headed during recent decades by a pro-active government and has ambitiously implemented the new federal strategies against poverty and inequalities. Salvador is also the capital, and the economic centre of Bahia. The municipal government deters tackling some great matters of development that mobilize the local population (e.g. waste, solidarity economy, transport management), but has initiated institutional innovations such as the setting up of a department for the promotion of racial equality under the influence of local black movements. The municipality therefore shows some forms of both resistance to and alignment with the development strategies of the federal and state government.

I started my empirical investigation by conducting interviews in the São Joaquim market place while scanning the dynamism and the wealth of the third-sector of the city in order to select further case studies. I rapidly decided to focus my research on the neighbourhood known as the Old-Alagados (the flooded) because of the particular concentration and dynamism of its third-sector and its endorsement of the fight against many forms of capability deprivations.

The site of the empirical research, composed of the neighbourhoods of Jardim Cruzeiro, Massaranduba and Uruguai, was born in the 1940s through the invasion by a poor population of migrant workers of a mud-flat area of the Bay of all the Saints (Kara José, 2008). They constructed stilt houses progressively on the water, while the inhabitants themselves slowly embanked the shantytown. The area of the Old-Alagados is particularly interesting for its social, cultural and political characteristics. The area is still hosting one of the most disadvantaged populations of the city. As in many of the poorer areas, it concentrates a young, black population and has many women-headed households.

Despite an authoritative political context that they had to deal with, inhabitants of the sector have built a great collective legacy over time. Since its creation in the 1980 and 1990s, a well-organised and well-known network of 28 different local socio-cultural

organisations, the CAMPII network, has maintained a social and political force of activism in the area and articulated most local actions. One of the local leaders [Part. 2]⁸¹ describes the culture that evolving in such a context has prompted for the inhabitants:

There is something particular to this territory, the fact that (...) very early on, we have learned how to work with the community (...). So very young, we developed a culture, a community action that is somewhat different from other areas of the city. (...) Within the community we progressed, we learned to do so because of the issues involved with living on stilt-houses, and the needs that it creates. If the state does not give you a thing, you will acquire tools and equip yourself to cope with the situation, because you do not want to starve. (...) The people here in Uruguai, Massaranduba, who are from the most impoverished neighbourhoods, we acquired that. If you are looking across the peninsula for the stronger institutions and actions, you will identify them in Uruguai, Massaranduba, Jardim Cruzeiro. (...) (There is a) a sense of belonging, so we are proud to be where we are, to be who we are, what we stand to defend, it is very common among us.

The choice of this site again represents an instrumental choice: the case of the Old-Alagados is atypical, because of the concentration of actors of the third-sector and of solidarity bonds between people, seen as a phenomenon of interest. This neighbourhood constitutes an interesting case for illustrating the political, social and economic changes happening in Brazil.

⁸¹ Codes used for the interviews are detailed in Appendix 1. Codes of the interviews

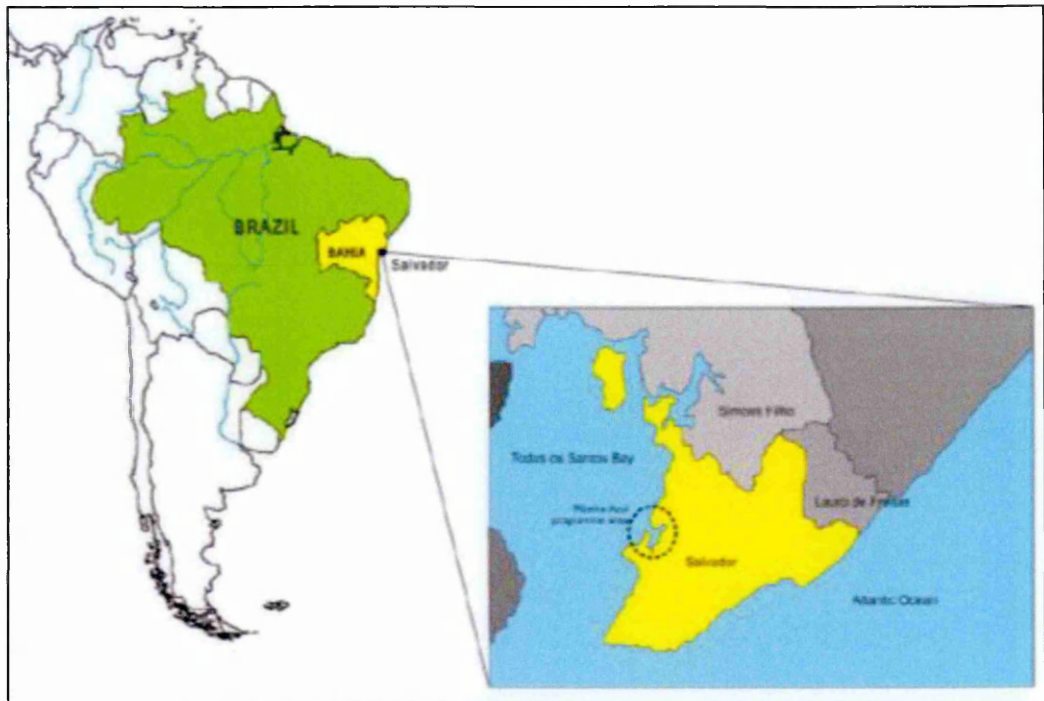


FIGURE 7: LOCALISATION OF THE ALAGADOS AREA (JENKINS ET AL., 2010)

To limit the empirical research to this single neighbourhood also corresponds to a practical decision in the realisation of the data collection. Three particular elements can be evoked: the great difficulties in commuting in Salvador, the low reliability in being able to schedule interviews with people, and the interest in spending extra time observing the social environment.

4.3.3. **The case studies**

Before the empirical investigation, I had decided to focus on one case from the market-sector and three cases from the third-sector. I had in mind to focus on an economic cooperative, a political movement and a religious community⁸² However, definitive decisions regarding the selection of the cases were made during the empirical

⁸² See footnote 72

investigation, following the previous methodological criteria, but also resolving practical issues.

My induction to the site of the empirical research, along with working on the acceptance of my presence and research project by the inhabitants, was highly facilitated by several gatekeepers. I first met the director of the local cultural centre (Centro Cultural Alagados), a central figure in the neighbourhood. Beyond discussing with me the particular socio-political dynamism of the area, she introduced me to the local Rede CAMMPI⁸³. Members gather weekly and discuss social, cultural and political themes of local interest. Participating in those meetings was a good way to investigate the diversity of the local third-sector. More importantly, it offered me a space to present my project and to establish direct contact with the leaders of two selected case-studies: Camapet and Umoja. In parallel, I had observed the regularity of the fishermen gathering at the Uruguai terminal, and informal chats with inhabitants had raised my interest in this group, when I finally approached them.

As a result of my induction in the neighbourhood, I selected the following case studies⁸⁴.

⁸³ Rede CAMMPI: Commission of articulation and mobilization of the locals of the Itapagipe peninsula.

⁸⁴ During the empirical investigation, the research was also conducted on two other case studies.

First, I had effectively been tempted to select a case study that could help to understand better householding as an ambiguous form of exchange. I found the relation of the population to the management and distribution of space, land and housing in Brazil particularly informative of this form. Therefore, I sounded out a group of inhabitants involved in the restructuring of the shantytown into social housing as a case study that could deepen this understanding.

Second, I also conducted my research with a community of Candomblé (an afro-descendent religion still highly practised in the poorest, and black descent sections of the society). This followed the intention to include a group which, in contrast with the other groups selected, does not have as its primary objective to maintain one's livelihood, but is organised around 'non-economic' exchanges, and therefore that satisfy one's lifestyle.

However, because of their different nature (as religious or state-led projects), but also the complexity and the wide amount of data accumulated, I decided to leave those cases aside for future analysis and articles.

The 'city-market' (Costa Souza, 2011) is the main and central market of Salvador, and an old and important cultural institution of the city.⁸⁵ The origins of the market date back to the 1920s, when it was called the 'Feira do Sete' in reference to the 'hangar seven' in which it was installed. In 1932, the market moved to the area called 'Água de Meninos' from which it adopted the name. Following a fire that has ravaged this area, the market was finally transferred to its current location in 1964 (Querino and Mattedi, 2006).

The market represents the point of interaction between the producers of the interior of the region and the inhabitant of the city, and receives up to twenty thousand visitors everyday according to the union of its workers (Oliveira and Angélico, 2006). It is divided into ten specialised areas according to the merchandise sold (from ceramics, to food, animals or ceremonial objects), with approximately 7,500 stalls of varying dimensions. It witnesses a high flux of merchandise and a mix of people with diverse commercial intentions (stall traders, clients, diarists or beggars). The market gathers independent or formal/ informal employees, mainly working as stall keepers (owners and workers are estimated to be up to 2 thousand) or offering carrying services (600 to 700 people)⁸⁶.

The market has been considered recently for receiving the title of historical and artistic patrimony, supported by the Union of Market Workers (Sindifeira), the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), the foundation Palmares and the National Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality (SEPPIR) (Viegas, 2006).

The empirical investigation took place in a period of restructuring of the market that involved the relocation of stands and changes in the dynamics of cooperation or

⁸⁵ The market is not based geographically at the heart of the Old-Alagados site, but in a neighbouring and dedicated area (34.000m²) further away on the highway (Avenida Suburbana).

⁸⁶ Estimations given by the leader of the Union Sindifeira in an interview the 21/02/2013.

competition between workers. This situation helped people to spot what may have improved or worsened.

CAMAPET COOPERATIVE

Camapet is a cooperative of production organised around recycling and processing reusable waste with respect to the environment. Camapet officially registered in 2005 after some informal years of practice. With more than 15 years of experience, the cooperative became renowned in the region. The local organisation CAMA – Art and Environment Centre – initiated the social enterprise in 1999. Camapet adopted the name of its ‘creator’ added to the name of one of its products, ‘pet’, a plastic from domestic bottles. The cooperative claims ‘to promote the reduction of environmental impact of waste by changing the local population behaviour and attitudes, promoting respect for the treatment of solid waste’, along with ‘generating employment, income and inclusion’ for young people and waste pickers of the community (Camapet, n.d.-a). The data-collection took place after an important fire in the hangar where the cooperative was previously installed, in September 2012. This fire had deeply endangered the cooperative that is experiencing a ‘new start’ with a more restrained activity. It comprised eleven cooperators in May 2013, half of those that were present before the fire.

Camapet is organised around different units and the following activities: the collection and selection of recycling material (plastic, paper, glass, oil and metal), the education about environmentally friendly treatment of waste, and the administration of the cooperative. The promotion unit offers lectures, presents the work of the cooperative and initiates collaboration with different susceptible partners (from schools, university to administrations and commonhold properties). The waste selection unit takes care of the organisation of a collection itinerary, and the collection, separation and processing of the material according to its types. The administrative unit is a distinct unit whose work will be presented further in the analysis chapters.

The self-help saving groups Umoja are small informal groups initiated by the associations Casa de Taipa and Santa Luzia⁸⁷ in the neighbourhood of Uruguai. The associations promote what they call a ‘saving methodology’⁸⁸, better known in the literature as ‘Accumulating savings and credit associations’ (ASCRA). They teach groups of people that aim to support each other in how to save and account for funds, in order to offer to members, the possibility of borrowing money from the group. They can gain advantages comparable to banking activities – securing savings, borrowing and receiving interests – but at a modest scale, which nonetheless progress significantly with time.

The self-help groups are independent and self-determined by their members. During my empirical investigation, the neighbourhood of the Old-Alagados counted 12 to 14 active saving groups initiated by the two local associations. A leader of Casa de Taipa explained that their aims diverge since ‘not all of these groups have equal relations of commitment to community development or social activities, and some groups have a

⁸⁷ The combined leadership of the two local associations evolved through time in function of their respective projects. On its own, the local association Casa de Taipa developed rotating funds. In parallel, the communitarian association Santa Luzia opened an economic development unit that has promoted the adhesion of local entrepreneurs to an external independent communitarian bank called ANDE, that had been initiated by the NGO ‘World Vision Brazil’. In 2010, the latter association decided to stop the partnership with ANDE after disagreeing with the non-reinvestment of charges into microcredits for the community. It led to the creation of the project Umoja in partnership with Casa de Taipa.

They also have structured a micro-credit fund (that amounted up to R\$3000 in 2013) that allows entrepreneurs belonging to self-help groups (and on behalf of their financial support in case of economic difficulties) to borrow up to R\$500 to invest in their entrepreneurial activity. It is a particularity of the project and support given by the two associations to Umoja groups, beyond promoting the discipline of rotating saving groups.

The associations’ ambition is to support the self-help saving groups as part as a wider socio-economic project. They also organise ‘barter clubs’ (where people can exchange unwanted items per units) and a local and new campaign to promote a local and solidary consumption within the neighbourhood. Doing so, they aim to prepare the ground for the implementation of a more ambitious project: the adoption of a communitarian currency inspired by a famous Brazilian project called ‘Banco Palmas’ (e.g. Jayo et al., 2009).

⁸⁸ The methodology they use follows guidance called ‘gold.d’, an acronym for ‘Local Opportunity and Development Groups’. It is a methodology developed by World Vision (Visao Mundial, n.d.).

purpose closely linked to production' [Part.1]. To give a better idea of the different forms of exchange and empowerment the groups encourage, two different groups were studied:

- Group 1, called the 'Meninas da Laje' (MdL) is a strongly connected group of 12 women who have initially participated in the construction of the community school 'Luiza Mahin' – this explains their name: 'the women that have raised the ceiling' – of which they are now the staff. They decided to create a self-help group themselves. The group had accumulated up to R\$4000 of savings in one year of existence, which represents approximately a saving of R\$300 per person.

- Group 2, called 'So entre amigos' (SeA) is a group gathering around 20 local self-entrepreneurs and aimed towards maintaining their economic activity. It has been initiated at first as a pilot by the Santa Luzia association, and constitutes what this latter considers as the older and the stronger self-help group of the neighbourhood. They had gathered almost R\$1000.

URUGUAI TERMINAL FISHERMEN

The local artisanal fishermen⁸⁹ constitute an informal group that meets daily at a local stilt shed, which they themselves built at the Uruguai terminal. They maintain practices of exchange around the organisation of common fishing activities, the use of the shed (as a place to keep their material safe or as a selling point) and spend leisure time together (eating together, bringing drinks to share, playing cards, etc.). It is difficult to estimate how many people may constitute this group due to its high level of informality. I interacted during my fieldwork, with a core group of approximately 15 people, amongst

⁸⁹ Artisanal fishing activity comes in opposition to industrial fishing (in capture/ vivarium) and entrepreneurial fishing (generally big industrial float). Artisanal fishermen work generally form small embarkations that can accommodate up to 4 people. The fishing activity is practised with techniques, periods of the year and of the day likely to differ according to the fish or seafood they intend to catch but also of the material available.

whom regularly appeared other faces. The members' fishing activity is highly variable according to people's other occupation and social status: many complement this activity with alternative jobs, fish when they do not find an alternative occupation, or fish to improve their retirement benefits. Most of them fish collectively and organise expeditions through their daily socialisation with the group.

As noted previously, those cases were selected according to a 'maximum variation' strategy in order to reflect the qualitative (rather than the statistical) diversity of exchanges in the market and the third-sector. In the absence of academic discussions regarding the variation of exchanges carried within the market and third-sectors (rather than the opposition between the sector), the cases were selected in the research site according to an empirical observation of the 'wider diversity' encountered. However, it is necessary to make sense of the 'criteria' used, and their limits.⁹⁰ The cases selected are limited to illustrating groups aimed towards improving people's livelihood, rather than towards satisfying one's further values.⁹¹ The case studies adopted here contain a monetary aspect (through selling, producing or financing) which is aimed toward maintaining or expanding one's livelihood.⁹² This unfortunately reproduces the bias of many development studies which still have the tendency to be mainly concerned with economic poverty, and to overlook making sense of broader capabilities beyond economic empowerment. The reading of the third-sector (solidarity economy) offered by most academics today is

⁹⁰ This acknowledges that the choice I have finally made in this research could have been otherwise and made sense of different 'variations' within the third sector, as reflected in footnote 84, p.146.

⁹¹ However, the borderlines between providing one's livelihood, and satisfying one's further values to be and do, are however less hermetic than stated here. As it will be shown in the analysis chapter, each group may satisfy or contribute people's further ambitions beyond economic achievements, but those are at the margin of their livelihood.

⁹² It is effectively still rare to find studies that observe groups of the third sector that do not pursue any economic or monetary dimension to be the subject of development studies. I think for example of local religious groups. Yet, the role of spirituality and religious faith for one's emancipation or self-determination has been recently raised as a matter of concern for development (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, (Lunn, 2009)).

effectively mainly perceived as offering ‘alternative forms of resilience’ in time of economic crisis, ‘facilitat[ing citizens] survival through reciprocity’ (Kousis and Paschou, 2014: 81) and participating in ‘income-related capability expansion’ (Vicari, 2014: 697). Yet, Camapet, Umoja and the Uruguai fishermen illustrate diverging political and social goals beyond their ‘formal economic’ activity.⁹³ Camapet is organised around environmental and social preoccupations and claims beyond economic activity. In the case of the Umoja, I have aimed to account for a group for which the monetary activity of saving, often associated with the formal definition of the economy, is assured through non-profit exchanges, and for which economic endeavours are therefore a tool rather than an end for one’s empowerment. The different cases, because of their economic activities and endeavours, therefore particularly interrogate the boundaries between the third and the market-sectors.

The different cases inform the degree of formality and informality that is often present not only in the third-sector, but also in the market-sector. The fishermen form an informal group of exchange because they have not yet gained an official status to organise their groups. Some fishermen are recognised as formal ‘artisanal’ fishermen, while other practise fishing informally. The Umoja groups are themselves informal, although they are highly supported and may be funded by the two official associations that have initiated the Umoja project, which are themselves receiving support and funds from the state. Camapet has only recently become formal, and actors of the São Joaquim market are both registered and unregistered.

⁹³ The ‘formal’ meaning of the economy again is opposed here to its ‘substantial’ definition.

4.3.4. Representativeness of the third sector through the case studies

Finally, the case studies echo certain categories of the third and the market-sectors. It is important to situate them in those two (sub-)fields and their analysis in their (lack of) specialised literature.

The market-sector is composed of different actors (e.g. investors, workers, renters) and of sub-fields that we may distinguish according to 'industries'⁹⁴ (i.e. according to the object of the trade), or according to the sets of rules and actors that shape independent markets within the field (e.g. labour market, financial market, service market). The São Joaquim market is therefore only representative of a minute category of the market-sector. To my knowledge, local or traditional markets have not been studied under the perspective of their contribution to human development.⁹⁵

The case studies from the third-sector illustrate categories mainly referred to as cooperatives, as 'accumulating, savings and credit associations' (ASCRA or ASCAs), and informal groups of labourers. Camapet is an example of a cooperative of production, a worker cooperative, or a social cooperative, depending on the focus adopted. The Complex of Scavengers Cooperative of Salvador to which it is affiliated represents an example of a cooperative of distribution. According to the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), a co-operative is

⁹⁴ Subfields may for example 'correspond to an 'industry', understood as a set of firms competing to produce and commercialize a homogeneous category of products' (Bourdieu, 2003: 91).

⁹⁵ It is important to note that international development scholars have contributed to a rich 'real market analysis' and literature that looks at other or interrelated subfields such as the informal economy (Hariss-White, 2010), finance (Crow, 1994), food or agricultural markets (Hariss-White, 1999). Hariss-White has particularly placed emphasis on the role of the state and/or social institutions in the regulation of markets (2003, 2005a), or the relation between capitalist markets and poverty (2005b) or wellbeing (2010). Ben Crow has particularly illustrated the link between agricultural markets, social power and change (Crow & Murshid, 1994; Crow, 2001). Their work echoes greatly with the data of this study, despite their approach being different from the Polanyian and capability approach adopted here. Yet, due to of space, such discussion will be left out of the thesis.

an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically-controlled enterprise. Co-operatives are businesses owned and run by and for their members. Whether the members are the customers, employees or residents they have an equal say in what the business does and a share in the profits.

ICA (n.d.-b)

Cooperatives are the most widely spread organisations of the third-sector and employ 250 million people worldwide (ICA, n.d.-a). In the analysis of the third-sector, a great attention has been given to cooperatives and a vast literature covers their role in poverty reduction (Novkovic, 2008; Simmons and Birchall, 2008; Wanyama et al., 2008), for enhancing the security of one's livelihood (Lemaître, 2013), or fighting against vulnerability (Hillenkamp et al., 2013). A new trend started questioning their wider role in human development, for example for empowering young people (Hartley and Johnson, 2014). For Vázquez, reciprocity in cooperatives is crucial both among workers (in the organization of work, the decision-making process and the distribution of collective resources) and between workers and the community. However, the level of 'reciprocity' and solidarity observed in cooperatives may vary. Lemaître's (2013) study of popular cooperatives in Brazil identifies a variation from 'politically-driven cooperatives', relying significantly on resources stemming from reciprocity for example through voluntary work, to 'politically driven' cooperatives.

Umoja groups represent examples of what the literature identifies as 'community-based saving methods'. Those are 'member-owned institutions in which small groups of people save together and take small loans from the savings'. According to Demirguc-Kunt and Klapper (2012), close to 100 million adults in sub-Saharan Africa use such groups. They are also widespread in Asia and Latin America. Community-based savings methods may take two different shapes, which are defined as ROSCAs and ASCRAs. Rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs) are 'small informal associations, generally composed of 10–30 savers and borrowers, in which each member regularly contributes the

same amount of money. The accumulated sum is distributed to each participant on a rotating basis. ROSCAs exist under different names, such as ‘tontines’ in West Africa’ (Utting et al., 2014: 19). Accumulating, savings and credit associations (ASCRA or ASCAs) are ‘more flexible variant of ROSCAs. Members’ savings are accumulated into a fund (sometimes placed in a bank account) that serves as a basis for loans to members, free of interest or with interest. The fund is managed by an appointed member’ (Utting et al., 2014: 19). They are part of the wider category of the solidarity finance, for which the development literature has lately raised an interest, notably following the attention given to the role of microfinance for development, poverty reduction, inclusiveness and wellbeing (Bouman, 1977, 1995; Johnson, 1997, 2013; Copestake et al., 2000, 2005). Yet, for Carvalho de França Filho et al. (2013), solidarity finance adopts reciprocity as a guiding principle, which makes this form depart from conventional microcredit enterprises.

The case of informal associations of workers, as in the case of the Uruguai fishermen, has not yet been studied in the literature. The thesis therefore builds on and contributes to literatures specialising in the different sub-field and categories of the third and the market-sectors. However, such literature is of an unequal quality. Moreover, despite the fact that the choice of the case studies echoes sub-sectors of the economy, this study aims to depart from a sectorial approach. This is possible through referring to the sectors as fields, and referring to exchanges as forms influenced by the doxa, yet independent of those fields. If the third-sector is defined in opposition to the mainstream neoliberal economic doxa and to a top-down developmental project, their action cannot be fully understood without acknowledging that its activity intersects with the political and economic fields. Such authors as Eyben (2009) explain, ‘[f]ields are nested within or overlap with other fields. The extent of overlap between fields explains how relational processes in one fields impact on those in another’. Camapet is inserted into the field of waste management, which is a legal function of the public sector, and is also an actor in the

recycling industry. The Uruguai fishermen are actors in the fishing industry. Overlaps and intersection help to explain the communalities and continuity of practices of exchanges between the different case studies. It makes sense of the legitimate free-market practices in the third-sector (i.e. their level of dis-embeddedness seen as their insertion into the market field), as well as non-profit exchanges in the market field. It might be witnessed in different proportions and space, according to different ties and tensions with the liberal doxa.

In the analysis chapters, the literature on cooperatives, ASCRAS, the market and third-sectors may serve to start discussing the extent of the trustworthiness of the findings, regarding the wider use of exchanges or the 'exchange - capability' relation. However, referring to this literature does not allow me to confirm their 'confirmability'. I refer to Guba and Lincoln's (1982: 247) notion of 'qualitative confirmability' as the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others. This is because the approach taken in this study diverges from traditional approaches of the third-sector in the literature. The literature focuses mainly on highlighting the distinctive nature of the organisations of the third-sector (e.g. cooperatives), sub-fields (e.g. solidarity economy), their values (e.g. of democratic, solidary, reciprocal, profitable), weakly supporting arguments over their distinctive redistributive and empowering potential (emancipation, social protection and self-determination). This thesis instead offers a focus on their comparative use of forms of exchange to draw a strong qualitative understanding of their relation to the unequal 'capabilitation' of their members. However, this study gains from evoking the themes or observation overlaps, made in relatively comparable cases or situations. Some elements of the specialised literature, which particularly adopt an exploratory case study approach 'in order to describe, understand or generalize trends on collective action, community solidarity, reciprocity, citizenship and agency issues, or their intersections' (Kousis and Paschou, 2014: 85), appeared particularly relevant for

discussing the reach of the findings despite the different angles of approach adopted in the analysis.

The findings of this thesis are grounded in the reality of the groups studied in Salvador, yet I believe that they have a wider application to other (and perhaps all) contexts. They illustrate my theoretical framework. However, to counterbalance the limited possibility of confirming the particular 'exchange - capability' relation through a specialised literature on the specific exchanges in the different sectors of the economy, the research aims to consolidate its degree of transferability. It aims to further research which could support the generalisation of the results. To enhance the transferability of the research, I have focused on thoroughly describing the contexts and assumptions of the research, and discussed extensively the extent to which the results may be generalised.

4.4. Design of the data collection

To investigate the 'exchange - capability' relation within the cases, I carried out semi-structured interviews. This section describes the methodological considerations behind this choice, and discusses the sampling of informants, and the elaboration of semi-structured interview guidelines.

4.4.1. Why interviews?

In the case studies, I adopted a qualitative approach through the collection of semi-structured interviews. Conducting semi-structured interviews is an appropriate method for gathering rich data focusing on the quality of individual experiences. It has three main advantages (Kvale, 1996).

Firstly, conducting interviews has the potential to provide highly illuminating material quickly, obtaining answers to questions faster than through observation. In this

research, it has allowed me cover a wider array of cases. It gives voice to people who have a wealth of knowledge and practices. Yet, it does not damage the quality of the data, since it also gives the opportunity to note and interrogate non-verbal reactions, or to follow up interesting responses.

Secondly, the design of a semi-structured questionnaire for conducting the interviews allows for control of the content, without removing the possibility for the interviewee to express freely and to make sense of the elements enquired. The questionnaire serves as a checklist of topics to be covered but leaves considerable freedom in the sequencing of the questions according to the flow of the conversation.

Thirdly and consequently, the design and adoption of semi-structured interviews enhance a systematic data collection, enabling the comparative approach desired through the well-defined focus on multiple case studies. It will play an important role in the data analysis. As Kvale (1996: 224) expounds, ‘different interpretations of the same interview passage need not be the result of haphazard or biased subjectivity, but result from different research questions’.

Therefore, semi-structured interviews with group members were carried out according to a questionnaire⁹⁶ divided into three main sections to investigate:

- (1) the identification of the different exchange practices sustained through behavioural and structural patterns,
- (2) the association (unequal) social structures of capabilities or functionings with exchanges,

⁹⁶ See Appendix 2. Interview questions, p.327

(3) the influence of the political context or of the agents, over exchange practices and the acquisition of capabilities.

The interview questions were drafted prior to the empirical investigation, yet I rephrased them while collecting data to simplify the meaning or to make questions precise according to the elements of data sought.

4.4.2. Sample of informants

Sampling the key informants in each case study is of crucial importance. Such choice cannot be 'backed by a statistical logic that justifies formal generalizations' (Shadish et al., 2002: 24) about the different sizes, or forms of exchange developed in the cases studies. Yet, the choice of participants may reflect people's achievements (in a non-representative way), through a purposive sampling. Without any previous information on the diversity of involvement of exchange in the groups and their effective capabilities, 'we could start by taking group inequalities in achieved functionings as indicative of inequalities in capabilities' (Robeyns, 2003b: 85). Therefore, I identified the different levels of hierarchy that appear within groups to mirror the different functionings achieved by the members (Robeyns, 2006: 354). Such sampling will 'include instances chosen deliberately to reflect diversity on presumptively important dimensions, even though the sample is not formally random' (Shadish et al., 2002: 23).

To do this, I made a 'general population screening'⁹⁷ through informal talks, often with the leaders or the person that served as a gatekeeper to the group. In the Camapet cooperative and the São Joaquim market, this approach proved to be necessary in order to

⁹⁷ '[T]he hit rate of this method will provide an estimate of the proportion of the general population that the target population comprises (...), although it may be possible to use key informants to elicit this information quickly and efficiently' (Wilson, 2005: 49).

account for the members' differentiated functions, involvement in exchange and sets of capabilities. However, in the Uruguai fishermen and Umoja groups, no real form of 'hierarchy' could be observed. This led me to drop this criterion after reflection and to simply adopt a snow-ball sampling strategy, since the absence of differences corresponds to the relative uniformity of members' involvement in exchange, but also to the characteristic of the exchanges they pursue.

As a result of this sampling process, 32 interviews were conducted with key informants across the four case studies⁹⁸:

- 8 members of Camapet, consisting of 4 administrative members (Adm.), 2 selection unit members (BW) and 2 members of the promotion unit (PU), *[the interviews of this case studies are coded from Cam.1 to Cam.8 and unit abbreviations]*;
- 7 members of the Uruguai fishermen group, *[coded from Fish.1 to Fish.7]*;
- 7 members of Umoja, consisting of 3 members of the group 1 (Meninas da Laje - MdL) and 4 of the group 2 (So entre amigos - SeA); *[coded from Umo.1 to Umo.7]*
- 10 members of the São Joaquim market, comprising the union leader (union), 3 stand owners and keepers (SO), 3 employees (Emp.) and 3 carriers (Car.), *[coded from S.J.1 to S.J.10]*.

4.4.3. Additional informants

Fourteen interviews with institutional partners and government representatives were conducted in order to provide some further information on the case studies⁹⁹. The sample

⁹⁸ For a summary of the interviews and codes used for the interviews, see Appendix 1. Codes of the interviews, p.325

of those political representative and institutional partners were set up for their pertinence rather than their representativeness in highlighting the context of action of the different case studies.

Regarding the institutional support of the Umoja groups, two sets of interviews were conducted. On the one hand, 3 interviews were conducted with the leaders of the two associations supporting the Umoja project (Casa de Taipa and Santa Luiza). On the other hand, 2 interviews were conducted with the project managers of the local branch of the NGO Caritas, mandated by the State to support rotating funds. Regarding the institutional support of the Uruguai fishermen, interviews were conducted on the one hand, with 2 project managers of Bahia Pesca, the institute mandated by the state to implement socio-economic projects towards artisanal fishermen, and on the other hand, with the director of the federation of fisherman of Bahia (FEPESBA). Regarding the institutional organisation of the São Joaquim Market, I interviewed the stand owner and leader of the Sindifeira union.

To reveal the socio-political context behind the groups of exchange, as initiatives of the finance, interviews were conducted with federal, state and municipal representatives of organisations in charge of solidarity economy and solidarity economy (3)¹⁰⁰, social

⁹⁹ For a summary of the interviews and codes used for the interviews, see Appendix 1. Codes of the interviews, p.325

¹⁰⁰ I interviewed the sub-Secretary of the Bahia State Secretary for Work in charge of Solidarity Economy, the local Federal Secretary and the Sub-Secretary of the Minister of Work in charge of the Solidarity Economy.

development and of the fight against poverty (2)¹⁰¹, and justice, citizenship and human rights (3)¹⁰².

The interviews with institutional partners and government representatives enquired into their perception of the organisation of the different groups taken as case studies, as well as the aim, programs and criteria of intervention of the governmental ones. Such insight has been complemented through a documentary study of official statements, laws and projects.

I conducted the interviews myself in Portuguese. They were digitally recorded. I asked a Brazilian transcriber to type all the recorded interviews word by word in Portuguese. I aimed to reduce the time spent on transcribing in Portuguese, while starting the analysis and writing in English, which demanded effort in switching languages (neither of which is my native language). In the process of transcription of the interviews, I kept the power to interpret the flow and intension of the interviewees, e.g. by editing and adding punctuation. I also translated into English the quotes used to illustrate my analysis.

4.5. Practical aspects of the data collection

This section presents further practical aspects of the empirical investigation and data collection that took place during March and May 2013. Having lived in Salvador, I had acquired a good working knowledge of the metropolis. Yet, I conducted some participant observation and addressed demands for reciprocation.

¹⁰¹ I interviewed the State (SEDES) and Municipal (SEMP) Secretaries in charge of Social Development and of the Fight against Poverty.

¹⁰² I interviewed the State Secretary of Justice Citizenship and Human Rights (SJDHDS), his Sub-Secretary in charge of human rights (SJDHDS-SUDH), and his Sub-Secretary in charge of Consumers Protection (PROCON).

4.5.1. Reciprocation

When I arrived in the site selected for the empirical investigation and started to network through the CAMMPI, local leaders rapidly challenged my willingness to reciprocate the exchange of knowledge. They recalled the many researchers that had already scrutinized the area and their inhabitants, and expressed their frustration regarding their past experiences.

As Gillan and Pickerill (2012) acknowledge, practices of reciprocation are common in the study of social movements. Yet, in this case, I felt a demand for ‘immediate reciprocation’ that for the authors ‘could preclude the important task of exploring a diversity of social movements’ (Gillan and Pickerill, 2012: 137). Therefore, I listened to their immediate concerns and offered local leaders to participate in any projects that I could help with while collecting empirical data. Consequently, I participated in the meetings of a third Umoja group that experienced some difficulty in the conception and creation of a communitarian tourism activity. I shared my reflection on the group dynamics and the strategy of communication they could improve. Additionally, I was asked by the leader of a local association (ABDAI) to help to structure a group of women that aimed to develop income generation activities. I therefore led workshops with them to help define a common ambition and strategy.

This helped me to be and feel accepted in the neighbourhood and to increase the level of communication with the local leaders. Moreover, in the creation of what became the cooperative ‘ABDAI Costura & Realisa’, I questioned the range of possibilities and the decisions to take toward the ‘ideal’ organisation of exchanges within the group (from the division of the workload, income, adaptation to needs, etc.) in order for them to function as they valued. This helped me to understand the patterns and limits behind particular forms of exchange and the social context that sanctions them.

Finally, at the end of my empirical investigation, I gave a presentation about my research during which I presented some preliminary observations. This happened during one of the daily meetings of the Rede CAMMPI, to which I had invited all the interviewees (whether case study members or political leaders).

4.5.2. Presence and participant observation

Beyond scheduled interviews with government representatives in the administrative districts of the city, I spent most of my time in the site selected for the empirical investigation. It was easier for members of the case study to agree spontaneously to be interviewed when meeting them at a pertinent moment, rather than anticipating and scheduling an appointment with them. This meant spending a lot of time in the neighbourhood of the Old-Alagados, being visible and socialising, while waiting for people to feel free to be interviewed.

My extended presence and participation in the life of the community had a methodological advantage. Beyond implementing a strategy of data collection based on interviewing key informants in the case studies and political institutions, my presence in the neighbourhood led me to gather further information through a participant observation that drew on an ethnographical tradition. It allowed me notably to validate the atmosphere in which interactions took place in the different cases and to observe interactions that people have not mentioned, to enquire later about of their nature and importance.

4.6. Data analysis

During the process of analysis, the different sub-research questions were posed to the data. They guided different consecutive and simultaneous phases and levels of interpretations, which were transcribed in the structure of the empirical chapters. The data

analysis mainly consisted in reading and re-reading the interview transcripts, identifying patterns, collating observations and comparing elements within and across groups.

I have first revisited the data with the aim of answering the first sub-research questions: *What are the characteristics of forms of exchange? Can forms of exchange be associated with people's empowerment in capabilities?*

The first stage of analysis has aimed at breaking down the different forms of exchange occurring first within and across the case studies. I do so by identifying exchanges corresponding to Polanyi's categories of forms as behavioural and procedural patterns. It focused on the two first sections of the interviews – i.e. visiting data with theory. Then, I confronted the incoherence of this categorisation to the data and refined the description of patterns and their pairing into coherent forms of exchange – i.e. revisiting theory with data. As M. Eisenhardt (1989: 541) points out, 'the search for similarity in seemingly different [cases]' led me to a 'sophisticated understanding' of forms of exchange: 'The result of these forced comparisons can be new categories and concepts which the investigators did not anticipate.'

The second phase of analysis aimed at identifying the different capabilities associated with each form of exchange within and across the cases, and at understanding the nature and influence of those exchanges over the unequal empowerment of group members. To make sense of the data, I have accounted for the members' similar or common achievements through exchanges to discuss their respective dynamics of empowerment. These two first phases of analysis emphasized the homogeneity of the diverse forms of exchange and their outcomes, presented in Chapter 5.

Simultaneously, I identified the nature of the contextual variations that would make sense of the dissonances and continuities in the use or the social outcome of the forms, identified in the first stage of the analysis. Three main features finally appeared to explain those variations: the combination of forms of exchange, the cultural interpretation of their

use or empowering role, or in the agency gained by group members over the latter. The first two elements brought answers to the following sub-research question: *To what extent do forms of exchange structure people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities?* The third element brought answers to the following sub-research question: *To what extent can people's unequal empowerment in capabilities be associated with their agency over exchanges?*

On the one hand, I analysed the association of different forms of exchange for groups to be able to function as they value. This helped me to understand the ambiguous empowerment of some forms of exchange, such as those guided by the search for profit. On the other hand, I analysed the extent to which social norms within groups and their apprehension of diverse objects matter in exchanges. I also studied how the values attached to exchanges, functionings and resources of members influence such divergences. This particularly helped to make sense of the forms of exchange irregular objects and degrees of empowerment, influenced by cultural lenses. Those two levels of analysis led to the writing of Chapter 6.

In parallel, my analysis consisted in examining the relation between members and groups regarding their empowerment through exchanges, and regarding the socio-political context that disable or enable their practices. It has consisted in analysing the interviews with the government representatives and third-sector leaders, along with the third part of the interview with case study members. It enquired into the extent to which people may influence the 'exchange - capability' relation experienced through exchanges. It led to considering the extent to which members and/or groups shape the exchanges in which they engage to acquire the capabilities they value, presented in Chapter 7.

Writing up this thesis constituted the last phase of working with the data, and aimed at reconstructing the coherence and continuity between the different theoretical and empirical elements of interpretation. It has aimed at respecting academic conventions

regarding the structure of an empirical thesis. Therefore, it has first presented the importance and current relevance of the research question, and has set out the theoretical and analytical framework developed in order to make sense of the 'exchange - capability' relation, taking place in the specific developmental context of Brazil.

The structure of the second part of this thesis, based on the analysis of the empirical data, may however appear to be less conventional. Rather than an in-depth presentation of the cases-studies, their context, and their relative 'exchange - capability' relations, this thesis has aimed to lay the foundations of an empirical theory that can make sense of such relation in more general terms. Therefore, the analysis describes progressively the main structural, sociological and agency dynamics that have been identified as crucial for influencing the 'exchange - capability' relation within, and across the different groups studied.

Examples from each case study were only reported to illustrate specific points, which may help the reader to understand how the knowledge presented in this thesis is grounded, yet 'extracted' from its socio-political context and from the experience of groups or its members.

Moreover, due to the wealth and quantity of the data collected, the ongoing process of analysis has been a process of selection, leaving aside interesting elements of analysis for the sake of a clearer argument, but also for the purpose of word and time management. In the different chapters, the more salient and illustrative quotations from interviews were chosen to illustrate the points made. Therefore,

The interview quotes selected here are not typical of the interview as a whole, but contain particularly poignant and complex descriptions of phenomena reported less vividly by other [interviewees] (...) and were selected from a theoretical perspective in that they point to key issues for the understanding [of the phenomena studied].

(Kvale, 1996: 224)

Consequently, it is important to say that some interviewees are more regularly quoted in the analysis chapters than others. This is the case for example, of interviews with some carriers of the São Joaquim market who were less articulate, but whose interviews helped to validate my analysis. Translations often obliged me to render the ideas expressed by interviewees, but yet to 'tidy up' the grammar of people's colloquial Portuguese in order to turn answers into an understandable standard English. When words were added to clarify the meaning, brackets were used. Where sections have been cut out, the convention of leaving dots (...) has been followed. This last phase has consisted in interpreting and building a deeper understanding of the 'exchange - capability' relation through comparing results with the literature related to the market and the third-sector, but also the study of capabilities and social structures.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to describe my approach to the qualitative methods and methodology used in data collection and analysis of this research. It justified my methodological choices and discussed their strengths and limits in order to constitute 'an explicit part of knowledge [of the reach of the study]' (Flick, 2006: 16).

This chapter has sought to build on a new theoretical insight into ways of conceptualising capabilities and the role of exchanges in people's unequal empowerment, in order to design a new methodological approach. It has first argued that this research departs from previous analysis of capabilities, constituting a sound sociological enquiry. It consequently argues that case studies constitute the most suitable approach to cover the empirical diversity of forms of exchange developed within groups, and to explore their relation to human capabilities. In parallel, it defends the methodological choice of Brazil as the focus of this study because of converging factors echoing the rationale behind the

thesis: the emergence and recognition of the third-sector, the fight against and decrease of poverty, and the persistence of inequalities. It finally presented the design of the data collection and analysis. It is effectively in light of those methodological choices that the arguments of the next analysis chapter should be understood.

Chapter 5. **Forms of exchange and capabilities**

This first empirical chapter of the thesis addresses the following questions:

What are the characteristics of forms of exchange? Can forms of exchange be associated with people's empowerment in capabilities?

The chapter argues firstly that a new categorisation, departing from Polanyi's categories, is necessary in order to document the different forms of exchange captured through the case studies of Camapet cooperative, Umoja groups, Uruguai fishermen and the São Joaquim market place. Such a new categorisation of the forms of exchange constitutes the first main finding of the thesis. It appears crucial to analyse the role of different forms of exchange vis-à-vis people's (relative) deprivation of capabilities. In the different groups investigated, forms of exchange enable patterned ways to socialise and to function, to access or maintain resources, or to arbitrate distributions. Simultaneously, exchanges are processes in which people are recognised, and at the same time, they recognise others. Those elements constitute basic capabilities, and are essential in the empowerment of people. They also shape their unequal sets of capabilities. Understanding people's (lack of) capabilities therefore leads to the question of their unequal experience and relative treatment according to forms of exchange.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Firstly, it introduces the different forms of exchange captured through the case studies. Secondly, it discusses the nature and the importance of the new categorisation offered. Thirdly, it starts clarifying how exchanges enable and support, but also may shape, people's unequal capabilities. It finally calls for understanding the dynamics of the 'exchange - capability' relation beyond forms of exchange.

5.1. Forms of exchange

This first section introduces the categorisation of the different forms of exchange captured in the case studies. It constitutes a crucial element in the later analysis of the ‘exchange - (un)equal capability’ relation, and the first finding of this thesis. Therefore, this section offers a brief but necessary presentation of the forms of exchange and of how they structure the activity of the case studies. This is crucial for the understanding of the ‘exchange - (un)equal capability’ relation and will be demonstrated and discussed further along the three analysis chapters.

In the cases, exchanges appear in six regular forms (See Table 6). People may first of all engage in particular forms of exchange according to their relative social position and (dis)similar identity. How people, pursuing the exchange, consider themselves (or their relation to objects and/or activities) matters for making sense of four different forms: people may consider themselves as equal [equality-matching exchanges], facing similar difficulties [mutual-assistance exchanges], unequal [status-led exchanges] or having the same opportunities [equal-opportunity exchanges]. Yet, the search for profit [profit-seeking exchanges] and the absence of distributive patterns [householding], constitute distinctive forms of exchange.

	Procedural patterns:	Behavioural patterns:	Administrative patterns:	Case study examples
	Conducts that shape the allocation of goods and services	Prerequisite mind-sets with which people involved in particular exchanges need to comply.	Practices that assure the regulation and continuity of the form and their self-reinforcing patterns.	(Some examples will be discussed later in the thesis)
Equality-matching exchanges	Rules of equivalency to maintaining symmetry between people	Flattened differences of the group	Transparency Peer-monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saving and participating in Umoja - Organization of the collective fishing activity
Status-led exchanges	Recognition of different functions, duties, responsibilities, and roles	Differences unquestioned and naturalised	Asymmetrical division of tasks, command, report and punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unit relation and final earnings distribution in Camapet
Mutual-assistance exchanges	Pre-disposition to contribute to the restoration of others' means for action/ opportunities to function	Caring for the others' welfare	'Normalised' definition of the access to and use of the benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loan allocation in Umoja - Safety activities in the Uruguai fishermen group
Equal-opportunity exchanges	(Rotating) democratic process: elections, consultations	Transversal endorsement of overarching criteria of decision	Induction, trainings and incentives to knowledge	Distribution of roles in Camapet
Profit-seeking exchanges	Cost-benefit analysis	Barter: negotiation of values	Reducing or managing profit-making uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camapet's scavenging activity/ and relation with providers and resellers - Fishermen's fishing activity and relation with clients and resellers
Householding exchanges	Absence of clear procedural, behavioural and administrative patterns			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction, maintenance and use of the shed in fishermen - Fulfilment of administrative tasks in Umoja

TABLE 6: PATTERNS COMPOSING THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF EXCHANGE

These forms are coherently constituted of procedural and behavioural patterns, in accord with Polanyi's description of the forms of integration. By patterns, I understand regular and distinctive habits that emerge repeatedly. I define the procedural patterns as the conducts that shape the allocation of functionings, goods and services in exchanges. They act as rules. Behavioural patterns correspond to the adoption of prerequisite mind-sets with which people involved in particular exchanges need to comply. However, the four forms of exchange identified in the neighbourhood of the Old-Alagados appear to be also structured around administrative patterns, strongly entangled with the procedural and behaviour ones. I define the administrative patterns as the practices that assure the regulation and continuity of the form and their self-reinforcing patterns. They are practices which follow the rules and the behaviours associated with the forms. Groups are likely to adopt a complex combination of forms of exchange in order to function.

5.1.1. Equality-matching exchanges

Equality-matching is a form of exchange through which people recognise and maintain their equal position. Umoja groups illustrate well how such a form of exchange, operating under the perception of people's similar identity, and aiming at maintaining such social *status-quo*, follows a coherent combination of procedural, behavioural and administrative patterns.

The procedural pattern seeks the equal involvement of group members in different activities. Participants are expected to match others' practice, but concerns and criteria of equality may differ across groups: they regulate variably different elements of the activity such as saving activities, decision processes and daily interactions. The Umoja case study consists of two groups: Group 1, called the 'Meninas da Laje' (MdL) gathers active members of the local community school; Group 2, called 'So entre amigos' (SeA) associates some local self-entrepreneurs. In Group 1 (MdL), members save a defined

amount of money with the same frequency (R\$11 every month), constituting a matter of equality-matching. Since an equal amount of money and rhythm of saving are predefined in Group 1, the unequal presence and daily participation do not matter: the group only depends on the account of saved sums in a common book. Group 2 (SeA) agreed on a minimum saving of R\$5 fortnightly, which leave members the freedom to adapt their personal rhythm as a function of their entrepreneurial activity. Differently from Group 1 (MdL), the amount of savings is not a matter of equality in Group 2 (SeA), unlike the physical presence of all members in meetings. Another more tacit and more crucial space in which members have to match their involvement corresponds to the voluntary commitment to reimburse the loans offered. An associative leader [Part.1]¹⁰³ explains:

People understand that saving is collective. (...) Others will pay the debt generated through their savings. Thus, [each member feels] oblig[ed] to honor commitments, because he feels part [of the scheme]. (...) Reimbursing is voluntary, but [not] if you want to develop this relationship with the group in the long term.

Members make sense and maintain their involvement in the group through a tacit acknowledgement of the rules of equivalency with which they need to comply. The behavioural pattern of this form of exchange is facilitated and strengthened by members' common identity (set by criteria or common history) or leads to a process of 'homogenisation' that flattens and minimizes potential differences. Group 1 (MdL) was established through the continuity of previous activities. Their members have constructed together the Santa Luzia association, where they are still working. By contrast, people can join group 2 (SeA) in a relatively free way. The only condition is for members to be local micro-entrepreneurs and to have a good understanding of the objectives of the group:

¹⁰³ Codes used for the interviews are detailed in Appendix 1. Codes of the interviews , p. 325

The criterion [for entering the group] is this one: you have to do something [an entrepreneurial activity], a starting point and you have to really understand what the goal of our group is. Then, these are the criteria.

[Umo.1]

Such a criterion poses a problem because it does not guarantee the compliance of new recruits with the rules of such exchanges. We will see later that another form of exchange compensates for this weakness. However, and referring to the former group, an associative leader explains the importance of the process of 'homogenisation':

A first difficulty is the problem of conflict, which is natural, but with time and through a natural selection, we understand that people have different interests, which will slowly be homogenized. It is not imposed, but those who don't get on well go away, [it is] a natural thing.

[Part.1]

Transparency and loyalty constitute administrative patterns, which maintain spaces of 'equality' between members. Within Group 1 (MdL), the information circulates through the common account book, which is freely accessible, and each member keeps a copy of the account of her personal savings and lending activities. In Group 2 (SeA), where members save variable amounts, the presence of all during meetings allows members to witness and account for the transactions. Transparency is thus genuinely witnessing, and transactions are reported in common and individual books. Because members comply with the previous patterns of exchange, the 'loyalty' within the group constitutes another administrative pattern of the form:

There is this loyalty of evolving without charging members to meet their commitments. So, we took key people and formed our group, so you know that in the group there won't be problems of being annoyed to charge someone.

[Umo.6]

Similarly, Balkenhol and Gueye (1994: 9) observed that in Senegal's mutual saving groups, '[t]he effectiveness of group sanctions, or "peer monitoring" is based on (...) "symmetrical distribution of information", (...) which means that every member is equally

well informed about the default risk associated with the allocation of the group guarantee to another tontine member.’

The cases of the Uruguai fishermen and Camapet confirm the transversal procedural, behavioural and administrative patterns associated with the equality-matching form of exchange. In their daily activity, Uruguai fishermen pursue equally balanced activities like preparing a fishing expedition, lending and borrowing minor tools. For example, when preparing fishing expeditions (collecting the food, material, etc.), the purchase and costs are shared equally. The fishermen also lend and borrow minor tools between each other on a transversal agreement. Administrative processes are solved by the small number of individuals involved in equality-matching exchanges (mainly 2 in lending activities, or 3 in fishing expedition), the presence of all in the exchanges (when purchasing goods, buying or dividing the benefits) and the confidence between the individuals involved.

In Camapet, a strong common identity between members, underlines most of the exchanges, which induces an equality-matching form of exchange. A member explains:

Being associates, working as a group, respecting each other, benefiting everyone and not only one: I think these are the highest values. We try to work as much as a group for things to be divided equally between the cooperators.

[Cam.2.Adm]

According to their strong attachment to this egalitarian perception of themselves, the work hour is set as a matter of wage equivalence, with no regard to their tasks or their different economic and social value. The wage is a tool used to set the particular equivalence of the symbolic and monetary value of people’s work. Camapet is however organised around three different units, according to which the nature of people’s tasks is distributed. Equivalence in the workload appears as a secondary matter within units only. This time, equality is matched within the waste selection unit, thanks to the hierarchy of the admin unit. The director of operation sets daily targets, and assures that tasks are

equally distributed between the waste selection unit workers. Therefore, he mediates the transparency necessary to maintain the form of exchange.¹⁰⁴

5.1.2. Status-led exchanges

In contrast to the equality-matching form of exchange, Camapet also illustrates status-led exchanges. These represent an asymmetrical system of task, command, report and punishment according to highlighted differences between individuals or groups.¹⁰⁵ As an example, and despite the egalitarian practices described above, the distribution of the members into units reintroduces a distinction of their roles within the group as follows (17 members):

¹⁰⁴ This illustrates the complex association of forms of exchange with authority settings. According to my understanding of the data, authority settings appear as complementary and separate spaces of regulation, rather than intrinsic characteristic of a form of exchange.

Due to a lack of specific data, this thesis will not explore the complex combination of forms of exchange with forms of authority, but refutes the connection made between institutional and authority settings such as Hillenkamp et al. (2013b) have transcribed in their reinterpretation of Polanyi's category [See Table 2, page 35].

¹⁰⁵ By status, I mean one's position and role in society, such as defined by Linton (1936). The notion of status therefore refers to the specific functions one is expected to have in society as the most determinant element defining the exchange, hence its name.

As it will be shown later, and in conformity to Bourdieu's interpretation of one's relative identity, such 'status' is read through symbolic hierarchies, forming social stratifications. Those symbolic interpretations play a central role in the negotiation of the level of entitlement associated with a particular position and role in society. However, the identification of one's particular status suffices to resort to status-led exchange, independently from one's symbolic position. As a consequence, what I will refer later as the 'circular use of the form', shows that the form does not automatically lead to a vertical order, but rather an organic social order (according to the Durkheim notion, see note 106) through which control/command/authority are defined.

If authority may appear to be an important characteristic over the definition of task, or the command, report and punishment which people may exert according to their status, I consider those elements to be a consequence of the (symbolic) interpretation of one's identity and prestige through his/her status. One is expected to exercise his authority to fulfil his obligations or to show some degree of submission, depending on the symbolic treatment of his position and role. Thus, one may vary in different fields and correspond to different forms of 'authority', while still entailing a 'status-led' form of exchange. Therefore, I depart here from the association of authority setting to the form of exchange, such as is contained in Polanyi's 'redistribution' or Fiske's 'authority-ranking' forms of exchange.

- four people are part of the administrative unit: one president, one accountant-administrative, one commercial director; and finally, a director of operation who articulates the administrative and the waste selection unit;
- two people are responsible for the promotion unit;
- the other members are assigned by default to the waste selection unit, which carries out the selection of rubbish, and of which two are selected to carry out the truck collection.

A complex use of the status-led form is observed in Camapet. It translates the survival of a remnant symbolic interpretation of the unequal value of the personal 'investment' of the members of the different units according to their roles. This, despite the symbolic and monetary equivalence of their different functions matched, as we saw earlier, through an equal hour wage rate. On the one hand, the form is used in a vertical way associating the function of the selection to an unequal and inferior hierarchical value compared to others. The role of the operations director illustrates the relationship between both the administration and the waste selection unit of the cooperative. She supervises the work of the waste selection unit: she monitors the workload, assigns daily tasks and goals and reports achievements of the waste selection workers to the administrative staff. In complement, a vertical hierarchy of reporting constitutes the management pattern of the status-led form of exchange. The job is particularly delicate for the director who feels the tension between equality-matching expectations of the waste selection colleagues, and her position on the side of the administrative 'hierarchy'. She comments:

[The directors] request a lot from me:

- 'You're the operation director, you have to position yourself.'

(...) [But,] in addition to knowing [the other members] in here, I know them out there. I know I have to position myself, that's not all about me. It also comes from them: they come to me, hug me, etc. I say:

- 'Calm down (...). Here we are working. (...) Look, you have to do this here and it has to be finished this morning.'

They become outraged. (...) Then, I say:

- 'Keep it down, (...) I'm just passing you a work objective.'

(...) I react, (...) but then I leave it there, it is nothing serious... But it is good to stand on your position, to be serene to separates things a little, because you cannot mix work with the people out there.

[Cam.3.Adm]

The term 'to stand on a position' appears to be a euphemism for expressing the symbolic violence that the vertical hierarchy imposes on individuals to mark and maintain the distinction between the different members of the Camapet. Beyond work orders, the 'ethic council' ('conselho de ética') is in charge of regulating the behaviour of cooperative members:

[The Ethics Council] looks at what goes wrong (...). If something happens, we have a brief record of it. If it is something you cannot record [because it is more serious], the ethics and administrative councils, talk seriously to that person (...). Does it mean that it is to castigate a wrong behaviour? Yes, it is. (...) If the person reiterate they can suspend the person for few hours, but it never happened.

[Cam.5.PU]

On the other hand, the relation of exchange between the promotion and the administrative units in Camapet differs in its schemes of control and order. In that case, the units exert a reciprocal (horizontal and circular) control one onto the other. To control the administrative unit, the role of supervisory board ('conselho fiscal') is attributed to the two members from the promotion unit, and inversely, the administrative unit exerts control over the promotion unit. One of them explains:

The supervisory board monitors the [president], the financial, the [commercial] or operational [directors]. Each one follows two people and looks at what they achieve in their schedule, what to do if something has been missed (...) and checks their activity outside of the cooperative. (...) We write a report and hang on the wall. (...) It is for everyone in here to know what the others were doing.

[Cam.5.PU]

By contrast and illustrating their lower status, members from the waste selection unit are somehow excluded from exerting 'control' over the work of others; they are just informed of progress from time to time through boards and meetings. This vertical hierarchy and lack of information was revealed in the interviews since the waste selection members had no information about the organisation of the other units.

A circular control in exchanges relative to one's different role or function may resemble the principles behind the separation between the judiciary, executive and legal powers of some governments. It represents a hybrid practice between the vertical use of social categorisations presented first, and what may resemble an equality-matching form of exchange. The differences between individuals in an organic social system¹⁰⁶ are maintained, along with the equal symbolic value of the different units and members. What is at stake in this exchange is to seek and maintain the complementarity of collaborators and their shared interests and rewards. Different functions and roles in exchanges are therefore not automatically resulting in a hierarchical system. Status-led exchanges convey and are organised through a symbolic interpretation of the unequal values of the characteristics that matter in the exchange, while organic exchanges translate their dependency and complementarity.

¹⁰⁶ I refer here to the term 'organic' in reference to concepts of 'mechanical' and 'organic solidarity' developed by Durkheim (1997). For him, mechanical solidarity refers to the structural settings developed in pre-capitalist societies. It corresponds to a society composed of relatively homogeneous individuals, acting and thinking alike and with a collective or common conscience, but experiencing weak interdependences and social ties. By contrast, organic solidarity refers for him to capitalist societies in which individuals are organised according to a division of labour and merits but experience high degrees of interdependency and strong social bonds.

If those two first forms – equality-matching and status-led – reaffirm people's relative identities through exchanges, the two following forms regulate people's (dis)similar resources, functionings and overall opportunities to be and do.

5.1.3. Mutual-assistance exchanges

Mutual-assistance is a form of exchange through which people recognise and act to re-establish their equal level of opportunities to function. Umoja and the Urugwai fishermen groups provide excellent examples of how their activity does so. Members' perception of themselves as possessing equivalent level of functionings, resources, and adversity to maintain them, enables such exchanges.

For Umoja members, what matters is guaranteeing (if not improving) the members' financial stability (their solvability or power of consumption/ investment) through their indiscriminate opportunity to borrow and be assisted financially. As a behavioural pattern, the care for the others goes hand-in-hand with the obligation to maintain social bonds and a permanent contact. The investment of time in this exchange is significant:

When we have founded this new group, we wanted first of all to embrace a larger aim. (...) The main objective is daily participation, that thing of you being there day by day with the person, knowing her difficulty and trying to help in the best possible way. (...) We do not want people to think that the group is just about taking the money, paying and it's over. No. We want daily participation, you know, bringing to us problems we would try to solve together.

[Umo.1]

She summed up the philosophy of the group: 'if you care for the other, you will also benefit from it' [Umo.1].

As a procedural pattern, members share a tacit definition of the conditions of access and use of the money offered by the group, despite neither of the groups having settled strict criteria for the loans. For example, in Group 1 (MdL), members claim to be able to borrow for leisure and cultural expenses (e.g. books, cinema). However, in practice¹⁰⁷, they borrow only when ‘necessary’, i.e. when they lack money to fulfil their engagement or when meeting their need beyond their economic reach such as paying for basic products (e.g. food), or making monthly payments (e.g. for school fees, laptop computers, telephone bills). A member illustrates:

Myself, I just asked for money when I needed it, after that I have not asked for more.

[Umo.5]

Priority is given to last minute emergencies, the drastic fall of one’s level of economic solvency and financial ability. Therefore, an informal agreement regulates the access and use of the money saved: the savings are spared in provision of future needs. On the contrary, in Group 2 (SeA), the money is not held in reserve but is constantly rotating between members. Members rather value the opportunity to maintain constant (if not increase) their power of to invest in their enterprise as a concern of their particular exchange. As a consequence, a member explains: *‘We never stop lending. There is always someone who picks.’* [Umo.4].¹⁰⁸ The informal norms of allocation and of the use of the money represent a latent and major administrative pattern of this form of exchange, since the groups do not adopt a clear pattern of rotation. Individual recourses to loans and their

¹⁰⁷ Such contradiction will be discussed later in order to make sense of exchanges as both widening and shaping one’s set of capabilities.

¹⁰⁸ Because they do not systematically lend the money gathered, Group 1 (MdL) is closer to what is defined as an ASCRA, an Accumulating, Savings and Credit Association. Group 2 (SeA) resembles more to what is called a ROSCA, a Rotating Savings and Credit Association (See section 4.3.4, p.144). The last group does not represent a perfect example of a rotating self-help group. In Group 2 (SeA), the distribution of money, though systematic, does not assign fixed turns and takes into account the different demands of the members.

amounts may differ according to their need or demand, but this poses a problem in neither of the groups. Yet, the transversal agreement of every member on the loans offered, represents a practical way to define forms of allocation and use within the group:

[The person] does everything in front of us. To borrow some money, she needs to know the voice of everyone. We all have to sign, because if one does not sign, we do not lend.

[Umo.2]

The fact that members are predisposed to help each other and preagree on using the resources available, constitutes the behavioural pattern of the form. Facilitated by an otherwise time-consuming exchange, the patterns of the form render the act of borrowing quasi-automatic and simple:

We pass this confidence onto [the members], it makes it upfront there will be no bureaucracy for accessing a loan from the group.(...) The loan within the group has no bureaucracy, you arrive and quickly you take it with you.

[Umo.4]

Polain and Nyssens (2013) respondents in South Kivu (Democratic Republic of Congo) also consider voluntary reciprocity to be opposed to reciprocal lending governed by social norms in kinship and community networks, and as ‘stronger, easier and faster solidarity’. This questions different forms of efficiency according to the scale, informality and kind of interrelations through which mutual-assistance may occur. Such a form of exchange effectively relates and informs formal solidarity schemes on a national scale, such as in social protection schemes. Observing national welfare systems helps to validate the tacit understanding of patterns of the form, mainly in the care for others and the normalised access and use of the help. Social benefits aim to maintain people’s level of opportunity in different social and economic spaces through maintaining their health, monetary or cultural resources for example. They organise the collective collection (or centralisation) of resources to maintain people’s level of opportunity vis-à-vis different criteria, mainly guaranteeing a minimum income and access to services in case of illness or

non-voluntary economic factors (when they can be articulated to more or less constraining criteria, such as in conditional cash transfer programs). These schemes are often attacked as non-effective because of people's fraudulent access or misuse of the help (claiming job seeker benefits to avoid working, for example). This validates the nature and importance of the administrative pattern of the form. This might also represent a symptom of the non-identification of the better off individuals, to the need to be involved in such exchange to maintain their levels of opportunity.

As another example, the Uruguai fishermen articulate similar patterns of exchange to maintain their physical integrity. Reciprocity is expected among fishermen in order to protect each other. Therefore, the group is collectively in charge of acknowledging the state of their companions on board:

I go to the sea with one or two people. I fear an accident happens there and not having someone to rescue me, as it already happened to many. Myself, when I go fishing, I do not sleep. I stay awake. I'm afraid of a ship passing over [the embarkation]. (...) The weather can turn bad and when [the other fishermen] realise, it might already be over us, preventing us from coming back. All this happens.

[Fish.2]

They notice the movements of lone fishermen to the sea, while they stay on shore, to rescue them at any suspect time:

You saw on that day, (...) we embarked to look for a mate that was broken ('quebrado') in the sea.

[Fish.4]

This denotes the attention and care they give to each other. Solidarity minimises the fishermen safety risk and constitutes the foundation of their union:

There is a fellowship. Here is the union complete, here there is always one helping the other, one saving the other.

[Fish.4]

That's the human part and our companionship, (...) we, ourselves, are going every day to the sea, so we need to help each other.

[Fish.3]

It illustrates well that non-economic concerns can be important concerns leading to the adoption of mutual-assistance, which matter highly in maintaining people's set of capabilities.

5.1.4. Equal-opportunity exchanges

Equal-opportunity represents a final form in which people may engage according to the acknowledgement of their relative social position. In such a form, people recognize and maintain their equal abilities and opportunities to function in order to enable further decisions regarding an unequal repartition of their roles and functions or status.

In Camapet, members are considered to have the equal opportunity to participate in all the roles within the three units. It constitutes the form's procedural pattern. A democratic process of elections and consultations, assures equal-opportunity exchanges. In Camapet, it is used to distribute roles:

Everything here in the cooperative is resolved at a meeting. We needed someone at that position. (...) Each member was free to candidate himself.

[Cam.4.PU]

The administrative pattern of the form is concerned with maintaining the equal ability and opportunity of members to play roles and receive further training about the cooperative's activity:

Camapet works a lot around the issue of education. (...) Every Saturday, we used to provide some form of training on solidarity economy, entrepreneurship, cooperatives, or accounting. (...)

Formation [assures] the rotation of people in each position. People pass through all the sectors, but their function is set according to their profile, right? (...) During the induction process, a person goes through all the sectors. Even just observing how it works, she will see where she wants to work. Then, the cooperative will see if she is really fit for that space. (...) The idea is to see

where someone fits best, not just because she wants it, but also people are showing if their result in that space does help or not, if they will be more damaging than supporting.

[Cam.6.Adm]

Another important dynamic of the form comes as the incentive to study, that may be of great importance to encourage members to gain more adequate resources to function within the group. It is witnessed to a certain extent in Camapet:

Camapet tends to encourage people who're not studying to go back to school, particularly the younger ones.

[Cam.6.Adm]

Rotation becomes a complementary concern of the form, to allow members to have different roles in the cooperative over time:

I was a fiscal controller, and then went for the operating sector, dealing with the logistics. Up to today, I have also worked a little in the area [of the presidency]: political representation, public relations, and today I am currently doing the commercial representation and give support to the logistics operator. But actually we do everything, we're in the office, if someone demands some help, we will give support, you see?

[Cam.6.Adm]

At the same time, the fair access to education and opportunity one has to candidate oneself legitimates the fact that roles are distributed according to the diverging profiles of members. Rotation may aim to balance the redistribution of tasks over time, but the form does not clearly offer an administrative pattern that allows the achievement of such an equality of outcome.

The behavioural pattern of the form corresponds to members' endorsement of the overarching criteria of selection. In the case of Camapet, people's efficiency and performance are associated with their profile and education:

We had a member meeting and there was a vote. My name was dropped into the vote. (...) They thought at this time I would be the ideal person to take on this position, and here I am. (...) It was not my intention to be operation director, but from what I saw, I also thought I was the most suitable person, because some had no schooling, profile, in the case.

[Cam.3.Adm]

During the induction, people go through all the sectors. However, people actuate according to their profile. (...) The collective understands that they have to identify where [the person] will fit best. (...) [This should reflect] not only people's wish to be in a certain role, but also account for their results: (...) whether the person will be more damaging or supporting [the activity of the cooperative].

[Cam.6.Adm]

The transversal agreement and acknowledgement of the different suitability of members serves as a shared discriminative factor to distinguish the individuals. Following other criteria, truck collectors are appointed for their gender and physical strength, which exclude more particularly females from the function. Finally, rubbish selection workers are assigned by default.

5.1.5. Profit-seeking exchanges

In contrast to the previous forms of exchange designed in function of people's relative position in social structures, a cost-benefit analysis shapes profit-seeking exchanges.¹⁰⁹ Exchanges driven by profits do not seem, at first, to encompass social actors' perceptions of their relative social position.¹¹⁰ All the groups studied are involved in some market relation. Yet, their search for profit does not affect all the groups in similar ways.

¹⁰⁹ This section only explores the nature of the search for profit and ignores the practices of buyers. I have not been able to observe in this study the search for what I would call 'utility-satisfaction'. I suspect that it might constitute another independent form following different patterns. I assume that utility-satisfaction may be highly articulated to profit-seeking exchanges (or other), and may to a certain extent, allow and sustain this form of exchange.

¹¹⁰ However, I will demonstrate in Chapter 6 that the high level of entanglement of profit-seeking exchanges to the previous forms of exchange, questions their social dis-embeddedness and their social impact.

The Uruguai fishermen, the São Joaquim traders, the Camapet cooperative and the Umoja saving groups consider differently the relation between their activities and their generation of profit.

A cost-benefit rationale follows the Uruguai fishermen in their embarkation. Their fishing activity is carried out over a number of days (usually 3 to 10) depending on the food they have on board and their success in catching fish:

As long as we have some food, ice and oil, we have to be fishing as much as possible.

[Fish.3]

They try to maximize their catch, having in mind the costs and limits of their resources (e.g. oil and food). The Uruguai fishermen also adopt a cost-benefit rationale when distributing their catch. They have the options of selling directly to the local community at the shed they have built. However, they are conscious of the fact that selling is restrained by the low capacity of the neighbourhood to purchase their catch and opportunity to generate profit. It obliges them to resort to resellers¹¹¹:

Sometimes we would prefer to [sell] to [resellers], when too much fish ends up [at the shed]. (...) Sometimes here, fish piles up disorderly, and we have to go there [to the resellers]. But here it would be better to sell [at the shed] because we sell for more. [With resellers,] we have to sell cheaper because they have to resell the fish. (...) Here, it is better when you know the clientele.

[Fish.2]

¹¹¹ The fishermen are not making this choice only according to a profit rationale. Their ability to carry out the sale is particularly conflicting with the fishing activity:

When there is not much fish I sell it here, but usually when I come from the high seas I sell it to a reseller, because I will not be in a condition to sell it myself.

[Fish.3]

By 'not being in condition', the fisherman means that he is too tired after long nights spent fishing in high seas. The time and energy necessary to carry out the sale, conflict with the time and energy that they had to put into 'producing' profitable goods in function of their available resources and technology. I discuss this element in the conclusion of the thesis.

The search for better profits introduces comparisons between opportunities to sell accordingly to the cost-benefit rationale. The exchange therefore put relations between sellers and buyers into competition according to their capacity to create profit.

In Camapet, deciding on the entities from which they collect the material became a question of cost-benefit:

[In] 2004 forward, (...) we had to rethink the collection (...). The volume was small, and once commercialized, it did not match our expectations. We could not equilibrate the balance between the levels of production, income and material collected. (...) Because of this, we have now adopted another collection strategy. (...) It was a new way for us to try finding a financial balance and to account for the livelihood of the members.

[Cam.1.Adm]

The cooperative stopped collecting from individuals' hands (described as a long process of collection and selection) and offering environmental service dedicated to their local community (such as aimed at its creation). Instead, they collaborated with 'big providers' such as schools, universities, firms and public administrations:

The big providers, (...) they'll give a great quantity of separated paper, then it is better than when it comes mixed. (...) When it is a firm the material is not as laborious for selecting.

[Cam.2.Adm]

It increases quantities while it reduces the labour involved. Moreover, commuting, as an emerging cost, adds to the invoice of their service provision:

Right now, for example, the selective collection offered by Camapet out of the Itapagipe neighbourhood is charged. But, why is the collection being charged? (...) Because we moved to other districts outside our territory, it brought operating costs: fuel, truck. What I collect in these places does not cover [such costs]. Therefore, it was necessary to create an operation fee to cover these costs.

[Cam.1.Adm]

The São Joaquim market place gathers actors that are aiming to produce profit for guaranteeing their livelihood. Their activity is directly shaped by the 'administration' of costs and benefits:

[If] you know how to work, to pay what you owe, to buy merchandise, [you will gain money]. You have to know how to pay, how to report. (...) My commerce is an enterprise, because I need to know how to administrate. If I didn't know how to administrate, I would not go forward. (...) If you do not know, you will recede.

[S.J.9.SO]

This quote also illustrates that if administrating costs and benefits correspond to the procedural pattern, then complying with trade agreements represents the behavioural pattern of profit-seeking.

In addition, reducing uncertainties in profit-seeking exchanges appears as the administrative pattern of the form. In Camapet, for example, members express the need to tackle the uncertainty of exchange:

We have nothing and no guarantee whatsoever unless through our work, our culminated effort which result in a production process. So here, we have a very large margin of uncertainty, which is what we are trying to get rid of in our activity.

[Cam.1.Adm]

Actors therefore struggle to maintain the exchange, through a difficult control over the generation of profit and its uncertainties.

5.1.6. Householding exchanges

Aside from the above-categorised five forms of exchange, exchanges may occur in the absence of clear procedural, behavioural and administrative patterns. In those cases, the socialisation and circulation of goods and services neither correspond to a social understanding of legitimate identities, practices and conducts, nor constitute a motive of social (and distributive) concern. Such exchanges have some importance in the organisation of the groups observed, yet they seem limited. I argue that it sheds light on the form that Polanyi called 'householding'.

The only characteristic of householding as a last form of exchange, in absence of patterns to guide exchanges, is the perception of the availability and 'free', unconflictive access to a resource (whether material or not) or functionings to satisfy people's needs or preferences, without a definition and control of either its prevalent use by some, or of its unequal incidence. Yet, such exchange may occur in groups within which identities may matter. In the Uruguai fishermen group for example, the construction, the maintenance and the use of the shed correspond to a householding exchange. Those who could and wanted to have participated to its construction. The Uruguai fishermen built it first to keep their belongings safe:

Here we almost made that shed here out of necessity: the need to store our material for which we did not have a proper place.

[Fish.4]

They also use the shed to rest, socialise, sell etc. Anyone who wants can takes advantage of it. Also,

[In the management of the shed,] there is no rule, none. Each one contributes and does [his bit]. Whoever wants pays 10 reais to be able to keep the electricity, water, etc. (...) Most of us are giving money, (...) who want and can afford it. (...) Not everyone can pay, 40% pay.

[Fish.1]

Similarly, in the Umoja groups, some members endorse a few specific roles (e.g. organising meetings, reporting loans and savings in the common book). A householding form is adopted, since neither the nature of those tasks, nor their fulfilment by few, represents a matter for justice to the members. Moreover, members who fulfil administrative tasks do not gain any apparent advantage relative to their contribution.

5.2. Departing from a Polanyian categorisation

This new empirical categorisation of forms of exchange departs from Polanyi's theory. This section introduces briefly the four great dissimilarities with Polanyi's categorisation. It invalidates the notion of reciprocity and redistribution as particular forms of exchange. It dissociates forms of exchange from authority settings, while preferring to account for administrative patterns. Finally, it questions the distinct nature of profit-seeking.

5.2.1. A new categorisation of forms of exchange

Six main and distinct forms of exchange are identified in the site of the Old-Alagados: equality-matching exchanges, status-led exchanges, mutual-assistance exchanges, equal-opportunity exchanges, profit-seeking exchanges and householding. In this categorisation, forms of exchange are defined according to their particular (behavioural, administrative and procedural) patterns. Firstly, '*equality-matching exchanges*' maintain symmetry between people and balance their relative participation and endowment (procedural). People's similar identity (behavioural), and the respect of transparency and loyalty (administrative) facilitate the form. Secondly, in '*status-led exchanges*' people recognise their different nature/levels of duties, roles and power (procedural), which they naturalize (behavioural), and according to which they build different levels of command, order and control (administrative). Thirdly, in '*mutual-assistance*' people are able to care for the others involved in the exchange, with whom they share a similar life-style (behavioural), and are reciprocally prone to help (procedural), in negotiated circumstances (administrative). Fourthly, in '*equal-opportunity exchanges*' people maintain their equal abilities and opportunities (administrative) and endorse overarching criteria (behavioural) in order to institute and legitimate democratic decision processes (procedural). Finally and

in parallel, people are guided in '*profit-seeking exchanges*' by a cost-benefit analysis (procedural), the need to manage profit-making uncertainties (administrative) and to comply with negotiated contracts (behavioural).

The new categorisation of forms of exchange departs from a Polanyian understanding of the forms of integration, i.e. reciprocity, redistribution, householding and market (Polanyi, 1944), for at least four reasons which are explained below.

5.2.2. Reciprocity and redistribution as transversal

Firstly, the forms of exchange identified through the empirical investigation echo strongly what Polanyi called reciprocity and redistribution, but they differ from these two forms of integration. For him, reciprocity relies on the institutional pattern of symmetry/duality and on mutual obligation as a relative principle of behaviour. Redistribution operates through the institutional pattern of centricity, and division of labour as behavioural patterns. For Polanyi, notions such as redistribution and reciprocity inform us about the nature of the non-profit exchanges. Moreover, according to him, reciprocity and redistribution is a characteristic of the non-market societies, those not embedded in market institutions. However, I argue that those concepts are not sufficient for understanding non-profit exchanges. Polanyi appears to have missed out some of the complex faces of reciprocity and redistribution, which transversally underlie different forms of exchange captured in this developmental context.

Moreover, the empirical data reveals the importance of non-profit-seeking forms of exchange today, despite the fact that they may be highly entangled with profit-seeking or material/monetary exchanges. Both forms of reciprocity and forms of redistribution are observed transversally in those exchanges, and therefore do not allow us to make sense of their specificity. In each form, a reciprocal acceptance and compliance to patterns maintain the exchanges. This echoes Bourdieu's perception of the fact that people may agree with

unfavourable terms of exchanges and that dominated actors play a role in their domination. The reciprocal acceptance of an identity or rather of the difficulty in negotiating a social identity, and eventually the constrained access to exchange and the opportunity they offer, also echoes the concept of adaptive preference. Distribution is at the heart of most practices of exchange, and forms represent different patterns of pondering and legitimating the circulation and entitlement to goods and services. Reciprocity guided by the philosophy of 'today's giving will be recompensed by tomorrow's taking' (Polanyi, 1944: 51) as well as pondered redistribution that Polanyi defined as a particular pattern, are, for example, present in mutual-assistance exchanges. This is a first set of reasons for why my analysis departs from Polanyi's categorisation of non-profit exchanges.¹¹²

5.2.3. A detachment from authority settings

Secondly, Polanyi seems to encompass a comparison of authority interdependence between people in the horizontality of reciprocity, versus the verticality and centrality of redistribution. This has led some followers, such as Fiske (1992: 689) to redefine the forms as follow:

In communal sharing, people treat all members of a category as equivalent. In authority ranking, people attend to their position in a linear ordering. In equality matching, people keep track of the imbalance among them.¹¹³

¹¹² Therefore, I refuse to endorse the terms reciprocity and redistribution to describe forms of exchange, unless when directly referring to the Polanyian categories, or their endorsement by fellow academics.

¹¹³ For Fiske, the form he called equality-matching (which imperfectly corresponds here to equality-matching, equal-opportunity and mutual-assistance) enacts a sense of fairness as strict equality, equal treatment, and balanced reciprocity. Communal sharing (which corresponds here to householding exchanges) enacts 'caring kindness, altruism, selfless generosity' and works under a 'traditional legitimation in term of inherent, essential nature of karma of group'. Authority ranking (which imperfectly corresponds here to status-led exchanges) enacts a heteronomic and charismatic command and the 'obedience to will of superiors'. Market pricing (which imperfectly corresponds here to profit-seeking exchanges) enacts 'abstract, universal, rational principles based on the utilitarian criterion of the greatest good for the greatest number (since this calculus require a ratio metric for assessing all costs and benefits). It works under a 'rational-legal legitimation' (Fiske, 1992: 695).

Hillenkamp et al. also consider that Polanyi's 'principles of economic integration (...) generate different types of institutional structures, which can [however] be combined in multiple configurations' (2013: 5)¹¹⁴.

On the contrary, the data suggests that the different authority and institutional settings are not automatically 'coherent' with or 'inherent' in the particular forms of exchange used, and may be detached from the operation of the forms itself. On the one hand, status-led exchanges do not automatically imply a centralising authority. Their control and implementation may correspond to different levels of hierarchy. In Camapet, for example, the promotion unit and the administrative units exert a reciprocal (rather than hierarchical) control over their asymmetrical duties.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, equality-matching does not imply a flat authority, but can be mediated by a special (vertical) entity. In Camapet, for example, the director of operation assures the equal distribution of tasks in selection units. In Umoja, the leaders of the association Santa Luzia initiate the saving practices of Umoja groups. The patterns of verticality or horizontality of an exchange are intrinsic to the forms of exchange, but their degree relate to their contextual and segmented use. On the contrary, authority settings may themselves represent independent distributive concerns.

5.2.4. The distinct nature of profit-seeking

Fourthly, profit-seeking departs from Polanyi's understanding of markets, at least with regard to two elements. On the one hand, for Polanyi, markets do not have a strict parity with other exchanges because they are associated with an institution designed for

¹¹⁴ See Table 2, p. 35

¹¹⁵ See footnote 104

their function only (Polanyi, 1944: 56). Polanyi consequently associates market institutions exclusively with profit-seeking exchanges. Similarly, other social institutions are thought to maintain non-profit exchanges (e.g. families or charitable organisations). Yet, through what he calls the 'plural economy', Laville (2015) illustrates the difficulty in reducing exchanges to institutional practices. For him, practices of reciprocity and redistribution dominate the Solidarity and Social Economy (SSE), via 'the voluntary collective actions of equal citizens and the state's attempts to redress inequalities'. But, he argues that SSE is also an element of the state and the market-sector. The data confirms that profit-seeking forms, identifiable in terms of the strict cost-benefit calculus, are present in different social contexts, rather than in particular institutions. Similarly, and as will be argued later, profit-seeking exchanges may not be the only forms observed within the market-sector. Forms of exchange (whether profit-seeking or not) appear independent from formal sectors of the economy.

On the other hand, Polanyi counterposed market exchanges to other forms because he thought that, unlike with other forms, people do not seem to engage in profit-seeking according to the acknowledgment of their (dis)similar identity, but according to a rationale of costs and benefits. Polanyi and his followers have interpreted the difference between profit-seeking and other exchanges as the dis-embeddedness of the form in regard to social norms. Yet, and as I will illustrate later, the data suggest that the strict cost-benefit calculus put forth in profit-seeking forms of exchange does not lead to the dis-embeddedness of the form, but, to its embeddedness in social norms, and this is so, for multiple reasons. On the one hand, the legitimate use of profit-seeking exchanges is framed by the society. On the other hand, and more importantly, profit-seeking exchanges are inevitably implemented in conjunction with non-profit exchanges. Their articulation with non-profit exchanges means that profit-seeking activities eventually account for social structures.

5.2.5. Administrative patterns

The categorisation of forms of exchange presented here differs from Polanyi's forms of integration with regard to the interpretation of the patterns underlying different exchanges. Challenging Polanyi's categorisation, Schaniel and Neale (2000) had restricted their approach to the mapping of institutional contents, to visualise 'flows' between sources and destinations of exchanges. In doing so, they denounced the association of 'institutional [with] emotional or attitudinal content' – 'e.g. generosity [with] reciprocity, authoritarian power [with] redistribution, and selfishness [with] market' (2000: 89). According to the authors, their graphs of the different forms of exchange¹¹⁶ encapsulate their institutional and behavioural specificities, whether they appear in totally kind or equally brutal manifestation such as charity and slavery. I disagree with Schaniel and Neale, and consider that the behavioural patterns translate complementary information about arrangements that enable and maintain the forms of exchange. They also matter to inform the setting through which the different forms of exchange can be implemented. Moreover, the four forms captured in the developmental context of Salvador appear to be composed of administrative patterns, strongly entangled with the previous ones. Accounting for those takes further Polanyi's account of the 'forms of integration' as behavioural and procedural patterns. It offers an alternative to Polanyi's association of the forms with institutions and authority settings.

¹¹⁶ See Figure 1, p. 19

5.3. The 'forms of exchange – capability' relationship

Moving beyond the work of Polanyi, this section starts questioning the nature of the relation between forms of exchange and people's unequal capabilities in this particular developmental context. The section argues firstly that exchanges enable specific capabilities. Those capabilities appear to be fundamental because they condition further forms of empowerment. The section therefore starts clarifying how exchanges support and shape human capabilities according to what may resemble principles of justice, but also discusses the limits of such understanding.

5.3.1. Capabilities and functionings related to forms of exchange

The data illustrate that forms of exchange lead to capabilities and achievements specific to the forms, and to the distributive matters with which they are associated. Accounting for the general and the contextual, the capabilities that group members have been able to develop through exchanges can be summarised as follows:

Form of exchange	Capabilities related to forms of exchange...	... and to the context of its use (specific distributive matters)	Case
Equality-matching	Ability to act and be together as equal by matching their levels of participation...	... in their levels of involvement and/or savings within the group	Umoja
		... in the fishing activity	Uruguai Fishermen
		... in the workload within the waste selection units and relating to the hour-rate	Camapet
Status-led	Ability to enact different roles and functions...	... in the allocation of workload and the final distribution of wage	Camapet
Mutual-assistance	Ability to care for the destiny of others and to organise systematic help...	... when people need to borrow/ invest money	Umoja - Group 2
		... when people are unable to fund their habitual basic functionings	Umoja - Group 1
		... when people's need to maintain their body integrity	Uruguai Fishermen
Equal-opportunity	Ability to maintain an equitable access to decision-making processes, and eventually to temporarily and unevenly distribute roles and functions	... the allocation of roles and responsibilities, along with investment/ profit-making decisions	Camapet
Profit-seeking	Ability to increase (individual or group) profits	... through the fishing activity	Uruguai Fishermen
		... through the recycling activity	Camapet
		... through market trade	São Joaquim

TABLE 7: DIRECT CAPABILITIES DEVELOPPED THROUGH EXCHANGES (RELATIVE TO THE FORMS AND THEIR CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTATION)

As shown above, those particular exchanges enable specific capabilities, which can be associated with the forms of exchange. Equality-matching enables people to act and be together by matching levels of participation (participatory parity) of peoples within an exchange. Mutual-assistance enables people to care for the destiny of others and organize

systematic help. Status-led exchanges enable people to enact different roles and function. Profit-seeking enables individuals or groups to increase profits.

5.3.2. **Functionings related to the patterns of forms of exchange**

In parallel to the capabilities related to forms of exchange, the patterns associated with the forms themselves are of a specific importance to enable those capabilities and more particular functionings. They might be considered as valuable functionings, to enable people to act in those particular ways, if that is what the individual/society values being and doing. They are particularly pertinent since they echo different literatures and definitions of development, and question their importance (e.g. transparency, solidarity, democratic processes or incentives to education).

A vast literature focuses on the themes, such as transparency¹¹⁷, which appears as a central functioning attained through particular forms of exchange. Transparency therefore implies equality-matching exchanges, or necessitates democratic processes of equal-opportunity decision-making. Forms of exchange may therefore allow to revisit important notions, patterns and spaces of ‘civic’ participation as a motor of human development. Stiglitz (2002: 163) for example considers that ‘development is a participatory process’. He argues that participation must be approached in

the broadest sense, to encompass transparency, openness, and voice in both public and corporate settings (...) [and] does not [only] refer simply to voting.

¹¹⁷ Kaufmann and Bellver (2005: 4) explain:

There is no commonly agreed definition of transparency. Some definitions used by international organizations focus on ensuring public access to information. For instance, the World Trade Organization states that ensuring ‘transparency’ in international commercial treaties typically involves three core requirements: (i) to make information on relevant laws, regulations and other policies publicly available, (ii) to notify interested parties of relevant laws and regulations and changes to them; and (iii) to ensure that laws and regulations are administered in a uniform, impartial and reasonable manner.

Participatory processes must entail open dialog and broadly active civic engagement, and it requires that individuals have a voice in the decisions that affect them. Processes, not just outcomes, are key to this broader interpretation of participation. (...) [Changes that implemented otherwise] undermine people's incentives to develop their own capacities and weaken their confidence in using their own intelligence.

(Stiglitz, 2002: 163)

Many development thinkers claim that participation (Steiner, 1988) and transparency (Carlitz et al., 2009) represent human rights, or that human rights require transparency of policy-making and democratic participation (Petersmann, 2000). Beyond human development, both themes have also been studied for their favourable impact and the good functioning on market and finance, which still are central concerns of development.

Similarly, a vast literature focuses on the theme of solidarity that here appears as a functioning attained through mutual-assistance exchanges, or on the promotion of education for all through equal-opportunity exchanges. It reintroduces the fact that specific forms of exchange (and their study) may be of particular interest not only for their social outcome, but also for understanding the difficulties in promoting, and maintaining valued functionings at the heart of development concerns.

5.3.3. Capabilities associated with pursuit of exchange in general

Moreover, and despite forms of exchange's diverging influence on 'human development' - through the enabling unequal and diverging opportunities to function - I argue that people's pursuit of exchanges in general enable five fundamental categories of opportunities to function. In the different groups, exchanges, regardless of their forms, have particularly enabled people:

- (a) to socialise and function in a specific social *status-quo*, and according to people's specific characteristics of their identity;
- (b) to be recognised and rewarded according to socially meaningful attributes;

(c) to maintain or acquire resources and differed functionings, in conformity with socially structured opportunities and through which one sustains and envisions a future life-style, and feeds his/her capability to aspire.

(d) to recognise and reward others in respect of their meaningful attributes;

(e) to negotiate/ arbitrate distributions of resources or functionings, and to offer legitimate and predictable distributive structures.

One cannot choose to exchange away from developing such capabilities, or to develop such functions without using exchanges. Exchanges inevitably enable or undermine those capabilities.

Finally, exchanges not only enable (or facilitate through resources) elementary functions (such as providing for basic physical needs, food, shelter and income), but also play a particular role in enabling people to achieve complex functions (associated with achieving social integration and self-respect, taking part in the life of the community, etc.).¹¹⁸ As argued throughout the following section, those capabilities are of particular importance because they are comparable to Nussbaum's (2003) list. Yet, the importance of the previous capabilities is observed through an empirical rather than philosophical approach, and appears crucial not for their sake, but because they condition further capabilities and achievements.

This work therefore renews the understanding of the importance of exchanges and capabilities. It treats exchanges as the circumstances to gain particular resources and dispositions, but also as structured opportunities to turn resources and dispositions into functionings. Therefore, exchanges not only enable actual capabilities, but also condition

¹¹⁸ On elementary vs. complex functions, see Sen (1992b).

later opportunities. People's involvement in exchanges appears to be fundamental prerequisites to maintain or enhance one's livelihood but also life-style, i.e. to promote one's levels of empowerment. Therefore, I argue that capabilities enabled through exchanges are of a different nature and weight, in distinction to Nussbaum's horizontal list and 'construal of capabilities as opportunities to perform (or not) particular valuable functionings' (Begon, 2013: 2). This work reaffirms the importance of looking at (and preserving people's involvement in) exchanges in development policies, as the means through which those basic and further capabilities may be dis/enabled.

The relation 'exchange - capability' therefore corresponds to three different levels as follows:

	CAPABILITIES RELATED TO EXCHANGES in general:
EXCHANGES	<p>(a) to be able to socialise and function in a specific social <i>status-quo</i>, and according to specific characteristics of our identity</p> <p>(b) to be recognised and rewarded according to socially meaningful attributes</p> <p>(c) to maintain or acquire resources and differed functionings, in conformity with socially structured opportunities and through which one sustains and envisions a future life-style, and feeds his/her capability to aspire</p> <p>(d) to recognise and reward others vis-à-vis their meaningful attributes</p> <p>(e) to negotiate/ arbitrate distributions of resources or functionings, and to offer legitimate and predictable distributive structures</p>

	FORMS OF EXCHANGE:	CAPABILITIES RELATED TO FORMS OF EXCHANGE in particular:
EXCHANGES	Equality-matching	Ability to act and be together by matching their levels of participation
	Status-led	Ability to enact diverse roles and functions
	Mutual- assistance	Ability to care for the destiny of others and to organise systematic help
	Equal-opportunity	Ability to maintain an equitable access to decision-making processes, and eventually to (temporarily) solve distributive matters
	Profit- seeking	Ability to raise (individual or group)' profits

	FORMS OF EXCHANGE:	PATTERNS OF EXCHANGE:	FUNCTIONINGS RELATED TO PATTERNS OF EXCHANGE:
EXCHANGES	Equality-matching	Procedural Behavioural Administrative	Maintaining symmetry between people Flattening differences of the group Exerting transparency and peer-monitoring
	Status-led	Procedural Behavioural Administrative	Affirming and naturalising differences between people Organising an asymmetrical division of tasks, command, report and punishment
	Mutual- assistance	Procedural Behavioural Administrative	Contributing to the restoration of others' resources and opportunities to function Caring for the others' welfare Defining the access to and use of the benefits
	Equal-opportunity	Procedural Behavioural Administrative	Implementing (Rotating) democratic process: elections, consultations Endorsing common criteria of decision Maintaining periods of induction, training and incentives to knowledge
	Profit- seeking	Procedural Behavioural Administrative	Exchanging according to a cost-benefit analysis Negotiating values Reducing or managing profit-making uncertainties

TABLE 8: CAPABILITIES AND FUNCTIONINGS RELATED TO THE PURSUIT OF (FORMS OF) EXCHANGES

5.3.4. The capability to socialise

Each form of exchange's specific behavioural, administrative and procedural patterns frame members' basic ability to socialise and function within the group. Firstly, '*equality-matching exchanges*' maintain a symmetry between people and balance in their relative participation and access to resources and functionings (procedural). This is facilitated by their similar identity (behavioural), and the respect of transparency and loyalty (administrative). Through these exchanges, group members are able to maintain what they identify mostly as social friendship (Umoja) or cooperation (Camapet).

Secondly, in '*mutual-assistance*' people are able to care for the others involved in exchange, with whom they share similar life-style (behavioural), and are reciprocally prone to help (procedural), in negotiated circumstances (administrative). Through these exchanges, members are able to care for the destiny of others and to help them through direct intervention (such as taking care of the other fishermen's physical integrity and rescuing them or supporting them in their financial difficulties) or more indirect intervention (such as giving advice or maintaining a constant dialogue). The Uruguai fishermen particularly refer to this relation as a relation of companionship.

Thirdly, in '*status-led exchanges*' people recognise their different nature/levels of duties, roles and power (procedural), which they naturalize (behavioural), and according to which they build a clear asymmetrical system of command, order and control (administrative). Through these exchanges, members are able to enact different roles and functions in the groups. Such relationships refer, for example, to the notion of 'profile' and 'efficiency' criteria in work relationships (Camapet) and tend to echo the ideas of natural gift/ or individual talent.

Fourthly, in '*equal-opportunity exchanges*' people establish incentives (administrative), mainly through education, that legitimate not only the equal opportunity and criteria to access different roles (behavioural), but their allocation through democratic

processes (procedural). The notions of social representation (in a political approach) or division of labour (in a managerial approach) underlie this relation in Camapet.

By contrast, people are guided in '*profit-seeking exchanges*' by a cost-benefit analysis (procedural), the need to manage profit-making uncertainties (administrative), and to comply with negotiated contracts (behavioural). These exchanges shape people's ability to function as entrepreneurs, to manage the creation of profit, and therefore to seek strategies of alliances and opposition to maintain and improve their place in the 'market'.

Exchanges shape people's opportunity to socialise. Their forms are bound to certain forms of socialisation (be they friends, companions, colleagues, entrepreneurial partners or competing entrepreneurs) and mediate their realisation. Instead of Polanyi's opposition between markets and the preservation of society, my approach converges with Weber's understanding of markets as a way to make society (Weber, 1978: Chapter VI).¹¹⁹ This explains why Fiske (1992: 690) has preferred the term 'forms of socialisation' or 'sociality' to the term 'forms of integration' used by Polanyi. For him, the different forms represent the basic 'grammar of social relation' through which people can interact. Fiske concludes that Polanyi's forms of integration are 'psychological models', or 'elementary models (schemata, rules or grammars)' structuring social bonds and acquaintances, rather than being substantive forms of the economy. For him, forms of exchange are in fact basic forms of socialisation that structure social bonds rather than simply schemes of production and distribution.

Pursuing exchanges enables people to socialise within a particular social *status-quo*. The importance of such an ability can be highlighted by drawing an analogy with the list of basic capabilities that Nussbaum (2003) has established. One's ability to socialise through

¹¹⁹ See section 3.2.5, p.102

exchanges echoes the capability of 'emotions', that is 'being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves' or the capability of 'affiliation', that is 'being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another'. Yet, the opportunity one has to socialise depends on one's positioned resources and identity.

5.3.5. The capability to be recognised

People's ability to socialise and function within the group through their exchanges, reflects one's ability to be recognised in society. The data illustrate that people's perception of their (dis)similar profile in relation to the position and characteristics of other actors, plays a role in determining the adoption of a form, that is, their ability to socialise and function in a particular *status-quo*. One's identity is the reflection and impression of one's involvement in particular exchanges within the social structure. Following Bourdieu, it might be said that exchanges help people to make sense of social structures and to pursue specific and situated functionings. These forms are both 'identifiable by the aspects of interactions that people attend to and the attributes of persons that are meaningful' (Fiske, 1992: 690). Thus, forms of exchange represent particular patterns through which one may be recognised in function of the particular attributes of people that are valued. Therefore,

certain relational features are meaningful (and other are irrelevant) for the participants' conception of any given interaction, for their intentions, plans, and expectations about it, for their social motivations and emotions, and for their evaluative judgement about it.

(Fiske, 1992: 690)

The process of socialisation in exchange is equally a process of recognition toward others. Behavioural patterns particularly maintain the perception of people's (dis)similar profiles – flattening differences, creating spaces of identification, or inscribing differences as natural traits or selective profiles. Forms of exchange correspond to schemes of

interpretation and production of the social order, shaping principles behind the unequal social appreciation and endowment of people.

5.3.6. The capability to access resources, maintain differed functionings and aspire

Regardless of their different forms, pursuing exchanges offers individuals the opportunity not only to socialise and to be recognised for their meaningful attributes. It is also the opportunity to access sets of resources, some of which are material and non-material capitals along with specific functionings. Members of Camapet describe the importance of the access to economic capital as a strong pillar that sustains ('sustento') many of their functionings. This idea is present in the Portuguese word, which also means livelihood. Members acquire the capability to maintain appropriate conditions of living and to be in charge of their family:

Here is where we take what is 'ours' [what is due to us], where' we support our family and all. There are people who pay rent here, (...) I have to pay my water, I have to pay my light, I have to pay my phone. I have my responsibilities [because] a child doesn't raise his mother; the mother has to raise the child, right?

[Cam.5.PU]

I myself gain [my livelihood in Camapet]. It pays my bills, the college for my son, for my daughter.

[Cam.7.BW]

Thanks to their fixed wages, members access differed capabilities such as the opportunity to be in charge and take care of their relatives, to have a decent dwelling, etc. Exchanges therefore have a powerful influence over shaping people's lives and opportunities, their direct and differed levels of disempowerment. Such differed empowerment is particularly striking when considering the economic capital that members acquire through their exchanges, such as wages in Camapet, loans in Umoja, or profits for Uruguai fishermen and São Joaquim traders.

However, to be able to guarantee their access to resources, people need to maintain exchanges. The need for a routine in the activity over time may explain at first the stability of the use of the forms. A fisherman commented:

(I'm) usually (fishing with) the same people. It is difficult to mobilize a different crew each day... It is not certain. It is surer to have a certain crew. It is like a firm, so everything goes better than when it keeps changing. Fishing has to have companionship.

[Fish.3]

The regularity and continuity provide a form of security, and enable members of groups to envision and plan how they could function according to what they value:

You know you have that thing that's yours, that's certain. You're working, you're waiting: 'On that day, I will get my money'. You can already plan things: to buy something for a child, to buy a better alimentation for the household. You know, that's good.

[Cam.8.BW]

Regularity allows members to organise, anticipate their future functionings, and respond to previous engagements. Through the consistence and continuity of exchanges, people envision the conditions necessary in exchanges to access further resources and capabilities for example the opportunity to eat better. This is of great importance for people in order to acquire differed functionings and to sustain one's life-style over time and beyond one's livelihood. Exchanges also play a role in one's (perception of) future levels of opportunities. Sarojini Hart (2013) has demonstrated how the capability to aspire is linked to one's perception of opportunities, and has argued for its fundamental importance in one's process of empowerment. Through this regularity, people shape their adaptive preferences or capability to aspire, and eventually, their (aspiring) social identity. To analyse exchanges as providing people with the ability to maintain and foresee differed functionings, is important for understanding their empowerment or their relative adaptive preferences.

5.3.7. The capability to recognise others

The opportunity to access different sets of resources through forms of exchange also represents the capability to recognise people through the unequal treatment of their resources and/or functionings. On the one hand, this corresponds to an empowering relation on which trust, for example, is based:

Knowing each other, being together with the other women (...) creates trust in one another. (...) We're trusting the women here. This is positive, to give credit to another person. It is trust that poor women still have, and their ability to gather up.

[Umo. 6]

On the other hand, forms of exchange allow people to adopt suitable and specific distributive patterns in the treatment of people's meaningful attributes. The processes of recognition and reward that exchanges enable echo Bourdieu's forms of capital reconversion¹²⁰: the conversion, accumulation and transmission of capitals¹²¹ explain how one's set of capitals entitles a person discriminately to access exchanges, resources and functionings.

Social and cultural capitals are essential for participating in all the groups and particularly condition of access to exchanges. For entitlement in non-profit exchanges, distinctive rules apply. In Camapet, members' different 'cultural' achievement (such as a differentiated level of education) justifies the transmission of some function and capitals,

¹²⁰ While neither Bourdieu, nor his disciples developed the notion of capital reconversion to understand different redistributive processes, I propose here to explore them as processes through which people's recognition operates in forms of exchange.

¹²¹ Through conversion, different forms of capital can be converted one into another. Through accumulation, the level of capital can be duplicated. By transmission, a function of a capital can be inherited, passed on or transferred. Abel and Frohlich (2012) completed this list by a fourth strategy: conditionality, through which the access to a capital or functioning depends on and is conditioned by other functions or capitals.

Bourdieu considered accumulation as a last rule of capital reconversion. It will be treated here in a separate section of the analysis.

when not flattened by their equal use of time. Conversion implies material, if not monetary, exchange developed in a profit-seeking exchange or an equality-matching exchange: the intention and legitimacy to make profit (i.e. an advantageous rather than an equitable exchange) are what distinguish transmission from conversion. In Umoja, for example, an equivalent level of economic capital or activity is the condition to be part of the scheme, but one's previous set of capitals is conserved and does not imply a conversion. For the attribution of the loan, a profit-making exchange is adopted, partially disentiing in exchange from some economic capital of the members, albeit the profit is re-appropriated and re-divided by the group which otherwise gained from the accumulation of their individual resources.

Exchanges act as unequal processes of recognition, enabling weighted access, repartition of rewards and transformation of resources. Exchanges materialise the unequal social value of people's meaningful attributes, and echo their legitimacy and social position. The three processes (recognition, entitlement and reward) operate simultaneously through exchanges and explain the patterns behind people's unequal capabilities.

5.3.8. The capability to solve distributive matters

Since forms of exchange enable people to recognise and allocate resources, they may finally be approached as enabling people's capability to solve distributive matters. Non-profit exchanges present two great distinctions. Firstly, people can consider themselves as similar or different according to their status, identity, and levels of functionings or opportunities. Secondly, forms differ according to whether these similarities or differences are meant to be conserved or restored. The forms of exchange identified in the case studies tend to translate standpoints in respect of spaces of equality and inequalities in social structures. They represent people's effective capability to treat themselves and others evenly or not. Through forms of exchange, people are considered similar or different

according to their status, identity, levels of functionings or opportunities. It is tempting to associate them with a constant equal or unequal facilitation of capabilities as follows.

‘Equality-matching exchanges’ recognise a space of equivalence between people and use reciprocity to maintain their equal level of resources and opportunities. ‘Mutual-assistance exchanges’ allow people with similar life-styles to restore each other’s similar level of resource, functioning and capability when those are unsecured. Equality-matching and mutual-assistance are exchanges that allow people to acquire, maintain or restore equal opportunities. In a pursuit of social justice that seeks an egalitarian redistribution of human capabilities, we may argue those forms to be instrumental.

By contrast, ‘status-led exchanges’ maintain inequalities by legitimating one’s distinctive attributes, access to particular resources and opportunities to function. ‘Equal-opportunity exchanges’ justify temporary distributions of resources and functions through democratic processes, while they otherwise promote equal incentive and education as an equal opportunity to function. In parallel, ‘profit-seeking exchanges’ facilitate one’s opportunities in function of opportunities for profit, and one’s ability to manage profit-making uncertainties and to comply with trade agreements. Status-led, equal-opportunity and profit-seeking exchanges seem to justify the production or maintenance of capability inequalities. According to such premises, people may act toward the recognition and preservation of a strict equality between people, the reward of merit and specific achievements whether through profit-seeking or equality-matching exchanges, or to endorse the distinctive nature of people, functions or things.

Thanks to the forms of exchange, people may proceed, not only considering vested interests, as when considering people as rational (e.g. as in game theory), but also when

considering more social interests such as ‘moral sentiments’¹²² (Smith, 2002), as dispositions (schemes of interpretation and action) acquired through practice. Through their involvement in exchanges, people may acquire what Rawls (1980: 525) defined as a ‘capacity for a sense of justice’ and possibly ‘a capacity for the negotiation of the good’ by negotiating the schemes of perception and actions that rule distributions and (dis)empowerments. Therefore, people may eventually enact what Rawls defined as a ‘moral power’.¹²³ One’s ability to negotiate the distribution of resources and functionings eventually may echo Nussbaum’s (2003: 41) capability for practical reason, which means ‘being able to form a conception of the good’. It has led Fiske to argue that beyond structuring spheres of socialisation, forms of exchange ‘are the terms defining the primary standard of social justice’, through the respective ‘meaningful operations and relations (...) [that] operate when people transfer things’ (Fiske, 1992: 690). Principles of justice, as a ‘selection of an appropriate distributive aim and respective principles such as equality, priority or sufficiency’ (Gutwalda et al., 2014: 360), may echo greatly the patterns underlying forms of exchange. Because of their fundamental importance for the empowerment of people, one may see exchanges are a primordial element of social justice. They produce social inequalities through the unequal recognition and allocation of resources and opportunities to function.

¹²² ‘Moral sentiments’ are judgements towards others, which Smith (2002) thought evolved alongside individuals’ natural tendency to barter, See section 1.2, p.17

¹²³ Rawls (1980: 525) defines:

moral persons [as] characterized by two moral powers and by two corresponding highest-order interests in realizing and exercising these powers. The first power is the capacity for an effective sense of justice, that is, the capacity to understand, to apply and to act from (and not merely in accordance with) the principles of justice. The second moral power is the capacity to form, to revise, and rationally to pursue a conception of the good. Corresponding to the moral powers, moral persons are said to be moved by two highest-order interests to realize and exercise these powers.

Forms of exchange may seem to enable people's ability to pursue social justice, defined here as an (in)egalitarian redistribution of human capabilities. Forms of exchange may matter for implementing different distributive patterns that particularly echo ideals of fairness debated in the literature, such as equalitarian principles or the search for equal opportunity. Despite a different categorisation of exchange, such premises converge with Polanyi's implicit appreciation of the role of each form of exchange as a social concern: whether enforcing social protection or the destruction of society. However, the reality is that distributive practices are anchored into particular patterns and highly contextual and segmented distributive matters, which challenges the global pursuit of some form of fairness.

Stopping the analysis at this stage would imply re-indorsing a static arrangement-focused rather than a realisation-focused assessment of justice. According to this partial account, social justice is the result of people's multiple involvements in different forms of exchange, through which they regulate simultaneous spaces of inequality according to compartmentalised criteria. For example, wages reflect profit-making merit, roles are defined according to one's status. People's unequal capabilities are the aggregate outcome of their holistic involvement in independent forms of exchange. However, it is important to interrogate their approximation to principles of fairness, with their limits enabling just outcomes/ social outcome.

5.3.9. The limits of a static approach

On the contrary, the data illustrates that the account of forms of exchange is not sufficient for understanding the extent to which exchanges structure people's unequal capabilities. The static understanding of the 'exchange-(un)equal capability' relation presented above overlooks many important forces at work that modify such a relation. Its dynamic understanding needs to go beyond the account of the forms of exchange, to reflect

the contradictions and incoherencies of their contextual reality with respect to the challenges of fighting against poverty and inequalities.

Firstly, exchanges matter not only regarding people's sets of capabilities at a precise moment. One's actual involvement in exchanges also shapes future opportunities to exchange, through which a person would access further functionings, resources and capabilities. Similarly, one's ability to socialise and function, or to acquire resources and maintain one's life-style echoes one's previous involvement, experience and trajectory in exchanges. As a result, exchanges matter not only for social justice because they enable and facilitate people's capabilities, but because they may sharpen or be used to prevent the reproduction of unequal levels of opportunities over time. Understanding people's relative (lack of) capabilities needs therefore to account for their unequal experience and relative treatment in present and past exchanges, and to question their consequences regarding their future inequalities.

Secondly, exchanges operate through the complex and integrated combination and adjustment, rather than aggregation of forms of exchange, and do not solve independent distributive concerns. The understanding of the 'forms of exchange-(un)equal capability' relation as detailed above does not make sense of the wider picture since it gives a holistic and fragmented appreciation of the 'exchange - capability' relation. The constant combination of forms of exchange and hence of their patterns (of recognition and distribution of resource and functionings) may contradict or reinforce the unequal way in which exchanges enable or facilitate people's capabilities. Such understanding of the 'exchange complexes - (un)equal capability' relation will be detailed in the first part of chapter 6.

Thirdly, the distribution of capabilities through forms of exchange may be strongly influenced by cultural interpretations. Cultural variations first operate through the association between distributive concerns and specific forms of exchange, and according to

cultural (i.e. doxic) schemes of interpretation and action. Second, those schemes structure the definition of people's legitimate attributes, and their relative processes of recognition and reward through exchanges, which would sharpen the intensity (rather than patterns) of people's unequal empowerment. Finally, exchanges are themselves subjects to cultural appreciations of their empowering role, and to restrictions of their use and, of the use of the resources that they mediate. Those explain the social pursuit of some forms of exchange, promoting particular capabilities and processes of recognition and rewards rather than others. Such understanding of the 'cultural norms of exchange-(un)equal capability' relation will be developed in the second part of chapter 6.

Fourthly, people's unequal control over their involvement in exchange, or over the level and nature of their empowerment through exchange, affects their relative level of capabilities. For example, one's ability to accumulate resources may sharpen his/her unequal opportunity to access further empowering exchanges. In parallel, people may pursue political, social and economic struggles, which renegotiate their relative recognition, representation and entitlement, affecting their involvement in exchanges, but also the levels of capabilities they may enable and facilitate. Such understanding of the '(un)equal agency over exchanges - (un)equal capabilities' relation will be developed in chapter 7.

Those different dynamics challenge the temptation to associate forms of exchange with an arrangement-focused appraisal of justice in terms of its unequal enablement and facilitation of capabilities. Effectively, it would be simplistic to perceive the outcome of exchanges as 'manifestation of justice' by only taking into account the patterned enablement and facilitation of resources and functionings that they operate. Therefore, raising exchange as fair institutions, or to think people as able to be 'reasonable', 'rational' or even 'moral' (Smith, 2002) in their capacity for acting fairly through their use of forms of exchange, poses a question. The extent to which forms of exchange represents imperfect

empirical opportunities (rather than institutions) to enable different principles of justice, allows us to account for the complex outcome of pre-existing social structures, economic tools, cultural interpretations and conflicts of agencies beyond people's sense of justice, which constitutes a puzzle that the following chapters will start addressing.

5.4. Conclusion

The chapter has sought to answer the questions of the characteristics of forms of exchange and the relationship between them and people's capabilities, in a developmental context. It has demonstrated that the Polanyian forms of integration (reciprocity, redistribution and market) cannot properly make sense of the forms of exchange observed in the developmental site of Salvador, Brazil. The chapter has offered a more refined analysis of exchanges to overcome this gap. It argued that it is possible to categorise exchanges according to their transversal similarities across practices and institutions. Exchanges, in that particular developmental context, appear (at least) under six forms: equality-matching, status-led, mutual-assistance, equal-opportunity, profit-making and householding, all regulated by consistent and coherent sets of administrative, behavioural and procedural patterns. The chapter discussed the central role of exchanges and its forms in facilitating one's capabilities and functionings, and in shaping indirectly people's future opportunities. Mediating varying sets of functionings and levels of capabilities, exchanges appear crucial for understanding people relative disempowerment. Forms of exchange represent patterned schemes of recognition and distribution that shape people's diverging sets of resources, and opportunities to function. Capabilities can therefore be analysed as

highly influenced by the basic structures – following the definition of Lévi-Strauss’ (1961) structural anthropology¹²⁴ - that forms of exchange represent.

However, the matter for social justice is not only the understanding of forms of exchange, but also the complex (configurative, cultural and agency) dynamics that shape their use and empowering strength. The unequal dynamics of empowerment through which exchanges need to be reviewed, because they remain the main tools for promoting people’s capabilities and understanding the social outcomes of policies and development practices in our societies. The next chapter will complete this understanding of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation by investigating the influence of the complex arrangements and of the cultural understanding of forms of exchange over people’s unequal empowerment.

¹²⁴ See Footnote 61, p.126

Chapter 6. The arrangements and cultural interpretations of forms of exchange

Chapter 5 has argued that forms of exchange in the specific context of Brazil enable people's specific functionings and capabilities. It has more specifically argued that because forms of exchange represent patterned schemes of recognition and redistribution that resemble principles of fairness, and shape people's diverging sets of resources and opportunities to function. However, a structuralist and patterned understanding of the 'exchange - capability' relation does not fully explain people's unequal sets of capabilities. Contextual (or sociological) variations explain discontinuities in the use of the forms of exchange, and dissonances in terms of their social outcome.

This chapter therefore seeks to address the following question:

To what extent do forms of exchange structure people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities?

Again, rather than privileging a descriptive account of those variations, this chapter (and the following chapter) attempts to make sense of the nature of those variations in more general terms, in order to lay the foundations of an empirical theory, rather than to build an in depth ethnographical description of their experience. The chapter will argue that the complex composition and articulation of forms of exchange, along with the cultural interpretations of their symbolic value and adequate use, influence the inequalitarian nature of exchanges. It discusses the different structural and cultural dynamics that may worsen or bind social inequalities, which seem to result from the principles of fairness that the different forms of exchange may encompass.

Firstly, the empirical data suggests that forms of exchange taken independently are not enough to be sustained, or, in the case of mutual-assistance, equal-opportunity and status-led exchanges, to solve what I will call ‘unsolved distributive matters’. This leads to their inevitable association with other forms of exchange on which they depend, and which modifies or reinforces the inegalitarian empowering nature and intensity of exchanges. Weaker ties between forms may occur through transition over time, and through juxtaposition according with the fragmentation of distributive matters. They may positively affect the sustainability of an exchange, or may endanger it. In addition, the articulation of forms of exchange may reinforce or modify the discriminative access to resources and facilitation of functionings of a form. The chapter therefore will argue firstly that understanding the complexity and nature of the assemblage of different forms of exchange is important since it may either contradict or reinforce the unequal way in which exchanges may enable or facilitate people’s capabilities. This analysis sheds a new light on the nature of profit-seeking that challenges previous theories regarding the (anti-)developmental nature of the market, by advocating for its capacity to trickle-down, or by denouncing its disembeddedness.

Secondly and in parallel, the data suggests that exchanges and their unequal empowering outcomes should be understood as practices and habits shaped by different cultural understandings, that are socially situated and a function of the doxa of (sub-) fields. Cultural interpretations influence the symbolic value, empowering strength or adequate use of exchanges. First, doxas (i.e. beliefs associated with particular fields of practice) determine the legitimate association of distributive concerns with specific forms of exchange. Second, they define people’s legitimate attributes, and their relative degrees (rather than patterns) of recognition and reward through exchanges, which sharpen the patterns and intensity of people’s unequal empowerment. Finally, exchanges are themselves subject to cultural interpretations of the empowerment they may mediate and,

of the use of the resources to which they give access. This happens mainly through the attribution of different symbolic appreciation of the distributive concerns, the individuals involved or of the forms of exchange they use. The chapter additionally argues that the cultural interpretation and adaptation of the use of forms of exchange therefore matters to make sense of how exchanges may be unequally accessed and may unequally enable or facilitate people's capabilities.

The chapter comprises two sections. The first section will make sense of the complex combinations of forms of exchange, and of their impact on the (ambiguous) enablement and facilitation of people's capabilities. This section gradually introduces the importance of cultural interpretations of forms of exchange. The second section will develop this understanding and will discuss the effect over the unequal enablement or facilitation of capabilities.

6.1. The structural arrangements of forms of exchange and capabilities

In one particular passage, Polanyi (1957a: 253) clearly recognised the complex dynamics of entanglement of different forms of exchange. Thus, he explained:

Reciprocity as a form of integration gains greatly in power through its capacity of employing both redistribution and [market] exchange as subordinate methods. Reciprocity may be attained through a sharing of the burden of labour according to definite rules of redistribution as when taking things 'in turn.' Similarly, reciprocity is sometimes attained through [market] exchange at set equivalencies for the benefit of the partner who happens to be short of some kind of necessities – a fundamental institution in ancient Oriental societies. In non-market economies these two forces of integration – reciprocity and redistribution – occur in effect together.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ The term 'exchange' has been replaced here by 'market' so as not to confuse the reader, see footnote 8.18

Polanyi therefore pointed out the possibility that a form of exchange can gain from, work alongside or be articulated over time to other forms. However, his contribution to the understanding of the complex entanglement of the forms was minor. Polanyi mainly emphasised the importance of ‘coherent’ combinations of behavioural and structural patterns. From his point of view, those forms were consistent with and predominant in different stages of history, in different social institutions and phases of economic integration such as gathering resources, producing, and distributing. Polanyi defined each form as what gives ‘unity and stability’ to ‘empirical economies’ ruling the circulation of goods (Polanyi in Servet, 2007: 261). Schaniel and Neale (2000: 94) note that ‘economic systems within a society have points of contact with other systems within the society’, yet they agree that what distinguishes those ‘systems’ is ‘where the dominant form of integration changes’. The literature has not analysed yet the nature of such connections between forms and their impact over ‘human development’.

However, the empirical data illustrates firstly that forms of exchange appear to be inherently entangled with other forms. The passage from one form to another and/or the association of different forms may happen through a transition over time, a juxtaposition according to fragmented distributive concerns, or through a forms of dependency, since some forms may not suffice to resolve distributive issues. The arrangement of forms of exchange also represents the negotiation of their distributive patterns, which may influence the nature and intensity of their unequal empowering outcome: it may either contradict or reinforce the unequal way in which exchanges may enable or facilitate people’s capabilities. The analysis of such combination of forms of exchange therefore matters because it informs not only their complex use, but also its influences over the ‘exchange - capability’ relation.

6.1.1. Transition over time

A transition from the use of one form of exchange to another may happen over time. Concerns may therefore arise over the ‘egalitarian’ outcome that results from such transitions. As a first example, the use of mutual-assistance to access loans in Umoja, poses a challenge with new recruits. They need to prove that they will comply with the terms of the exchange, and to gain the confidence of the older members. In Group 2 (SeA), new and ‘not yet fully trusted’ members are temporarily entitled to access loans proportional to their savings:

We lend that money you saved, (...) according to the money that you own.
Then, you will borrow of the size of your savings.

[Umo.4]

This process allows new members to be still accepted in and ‘tested’, and to demonstrate their compliance with the behavioural and procedural expectation of the exchange:

I just needed some money. I got here, I was very new, and they lent me. (...)
They agreed. I was new, they didn’t know me well.

[Umo. 2]

It constitutes a planned transition from the use of a status-led, to a ‘full’ and ‘unconditional’ entitlement to the fund, which older members equally share.

Transition over time may particularly become an ‘issue’ with equal-opportunity exchanges since it lays a ground for a shift to status-led exchanges. The equal-opportunity elective process, used to distribute tasks between members, does not imply tasks to be associated with a different social value (at least over time). Camapet directors claim that the different roles within the cooperative do not represent an unequal order, which the egalitarian principle of wage-equivalence otherwise guarantee. However, it may be prone to reintroducing and legitimating subtle forms of social distinctions. In other words, they are symbolic signs of more legitimate status. In Camapet, such ‘distinction’ appears under the notion of responsibility, through which a different symbolic and economic value is

given to the cooperators' function and personal investment¹²⁶. The president of the cooperative comments on his particular duties and responsibilities toward the group:

Everyone is the same regardless of what is [his role], director or cooperators. There is no difference; no place to say: 'I'm better than you because I'm a director'. Everyone here is the same. Simply, the responsibility of the board of directors is greater.

[Cam.1.Adm]

In Camapet, the recognition of different levels of responsibility matters since it legitimates a subtle 'status-led' allocation not only of the opportunity one has to increase one's wage, but also to aspire to progress toward an administrative role or to take decisions. First of all, every member of the cooperative works eight hours a day. However, such a restriction does not concern workers with administrative tasks, who work on average 15 to 20% more than the others, under the legitimacy of their higher responsibility level.¹²⁷ They thus claim proportionally more in the division of benefits. Meanwhile, selection workers do not have the possibility of extending their hours of work.

Secondly, through an 'adaptive preference' dynamic, people identify themselves and align their expectations with their unequal levels of abilities/ responsibilities. The weakness of internal educative schemes reinforces this tendency. It endangers elective processes over time, by lowering the aspiration of the waste selection workers to access administrative roles. It introduces a 'self-selection' bias:

We prefer people to offer their candidature. (...) In few cases, (...) there were no candidates. (...) People are not interested because they think they are not prepared or for various other reasons.

[Cam.6.Adm]

¹²⁶ See section 5.1.2, p.176

¹²⁷ Administrative workers estimate working 190-200 hours per month on average, while the waste selection unit workers work approximately 168 hours.

The selective process of the allocation of duties, according to an overarching criterion, which nonetheless bears a symbolic burden, produces some form of auto-exclusion. When talking about the opportunity to integrate the Communication unit, a member of Camapet explained:

I'm not able to talk. I know and I recognize that I do not have that great level of Portuguese... and I am not a very open person to go and give a lecture at a school.

[Cam.8.BW]

In contrast, the administrative staff express a duty towards the group. They tend to 'naturalise' their different role and mission toward the group, and associate the results to with one's charisma. Those tendencies nurture a status-led behavioural pattern:

In Camapet, (...) as president, (...) I have the role to represent, supervise and sort of lead along with other companions the organization of the venture. (...) I cannot leave, and withdraw everything I have achieved.

[Cam.1.Adm]

Moreover, the Camapet administrator explained how the knowledge she acquired through her position had widened her horizons, and nurtured a favourable virtuous cycle:

As a director of Camapet, I took a course, a course in logistics. And, this is already very good for my resume, it let me see more.

[Cam.3.Adm]

A form may disproportionately support people's aspirations according to the diverging cultural treatment of their social position in exchanges. Consequently, one constant minority of the members has mainly occupied the administrative roles of the cooperative.

Thirdly, someone's equal opportunity to express himself/herself and to participate in decisions may be encouraged by the philosophy of self-management and of equivalence between the members of the cooperative. However, due to the delegation of responsibilities, members do not all hold the same power in decision-making processes. Administrators think through the collective activity, they identify problems to be addressed, but they also

explore their solutions and; they eventually consult the others for their consent (and only that):

- Does it mean that the board of directors think about what should be done, and bring this to the assembly for a common evaluation. Is that it?

- Yes. (...) [and] for example, if they think that what the direction offered is not valid, we sit together and see what is best for everyone. We never decide anything except in that way.

[Cam.2.Adm]

A distinction exists in the effective power that each one has to identify problems or to offer solutions. The waste selection workers only have the power to agree or disagree with the solutions proposed, whereas admin members decide when meetings should be organised, which problems matter and then when the other members can have a say about all these. Consequently, there is no clear 'routine' in the participatory/decision-making processes and the unit members are left without information of the specific operating rules of the cooperative. This was striking in the interviews conducted with members of the waste selection units, who, when asked, had no idea about the rules and decision-making processes happening in the cooperative. The outcome of the equality-opportunity form of exchange is porous and influenced by pre-existing perceptions of the unequal value of people.

There might be two different and converging ways to interpret the shift from equal-opportunity to status-led exchanges. On the one hand, we may interpret the form as assigning differences between people, in line with the members' endorsement of an overarching criteria for decisions, inclined to introduce over time a (circular if not vertical) status-led organisation. On the other hand, we may see the form of exchange as endorsing

symbolic and cultural – and therefore arbitrary¹²⁸ – levels of recognition and reward, which tend to be naturalised by the fact that they are self-reinforcing and self-advocating habitual practices. Yet, this may compromise a woman's opportunities, for example, leading her to accept a particular treatment through exchange, according to which she will adjust her ability to aspire. This seems to be particularly the case of equal-opportunity exchanges. Therefore, the cultural doxa of each field (such as here, the relatively flat definition of the status of administrative vs. selection workers) not only defines when people needs to be treated with diverging lenses or blinkers, but also encompass cultural definitions of, the sense and degrees of such diverging recognition and rewards. Those sharpen the inegalitarian empowering nature of the forms, and entail the reproduction of the social order.

A shift from equality-matching to status-led exchanges has been particularly noted as a major concern in a contested study carried out by UNRISD¹²⁹ in 1969 (Carroll et al., 1969). It suggested that, 'cooperatives in developing areas [brought] little benefit to the masses of poorer inhabitants of those areas' (UNRISD, 1975: ix in Utting et al., 2014: 14). It considered cooperatives as particularly likely to be captured by dominating classes, the elite and/or controlled by the state, and subject to mismanagement or corruption (Develtere et al., 2008). However, these risks need to be balanced. In the case of Camapet for example, the structure of the cooperative has helped young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to create an autonomous self-empowering experience. Inequalities noted in Camapet are minimal, and are not yet inscribed in a struggle of class, even if they help here to illustrate the disempowering concerns that the use of equal-opportunity arises. (Carroll et al., 1969)

¹²⁸ I use the word 'arbitrarily' with a Bourdieusian meaning, i.e. things could be otherwise but make sense of the ongoing power relations.

¹²⁹ UNRISD: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

study did however reveal the need for analysing the reality of collective action as an experience that may derive from and reproduce people's unequal powers.

Time and predispositions to some patterns of exchange may therefore facilitate or provoke the transition between the different forms of exchange. Forms may apply differently over time due to their latent legitimization of (in)equalities, or for meeting the imperative set by their behavioural, administrative or procedural patterns (e.g. trust, uniformity, and control over uncertainties). Their disempowering outcomes reflect such dynamics.

6.1.2. Juxtapositions

Profit-seeking and non-profit-seeking forms of exchange may be juxtaposed in practices according to different matters of exchange, and to reinforce one form or the other. However, the strength of such reinforcement needs to account for the biased understanding of the value of the use of a form, or of their empowering role.

PROFIT-SEEKING USED TO REINFORCE NON-PROFIT-SEEKING EXCHANGES

On the one hand, profit-seeking can serve to maintain non-profit exchanges. Within Camapet for example, the fact that risks in the profit-seeking activity directly affect all the members through their wage, consolidates the involvement of all members in the cost-benefit decision processes:

Nowadays, if a truck breaks down, (...) the repairs are deducted from our income. (...) Because [of this distributed impact] everyone is responsible, of what goes right or wrong, of what will be good or bad for us. Then, everyone (...) must take a decision together. (...)

For example: fixing a truck. We bring the budget to the board, we assess how it can be paid and if it needs to enter as a cost. [We] bring and present the matter to the assembly and then we decide whether or not we can repair it.

[Cam2.Adm]

All the members share the responsibility of deciding cost-benefits matters because they share their risks and their consequences.¹³⁰ The equal involvement in the profit-making decisions may be interpreted not as a way to question an ‘illegitimate’ use of a profit-making exchange, which is here, the fact that in a more liberal interpretation of the profit-making rules of the games, investors would not need to consult the people who would be affected by investments, such as their employees. This might be a reason why, as Vicari (2014: 684) notes, ‘co-operatives are enterprises that, while pursuing the mutual aims of members, enable their active participation and democratic decision-making.’ Vicari (2014: 697) later suggests that

although the entrepreneurial component is crucial for the co-operative to exist and work for its members, the participatory dimension is an equally key component, holding both an intrinsic and instrumental value. As an intrinsic value, it empowers members and enables them to access participation-related capabilities, such as participation in community life and in household decision-making. As an instrumental value, participation is the basis for collective agency through which members can transform the institutions that affect their lives, network[s] and access [to] remunerative markets, and strengthen the co-operative as a sustainable business.

However, this can also be interpreted as a way for members to share the belief that their involvement in profit-seeking is worth playing (i.e. depicting their *illusio*) and their endorsement of its rules of the game. Consequently, actors of Camapet interpret the failure to raise profit as a fault in anticipating uncertainties:

Because of our miscalculation, (...) today the cooperative catches fire, tomorrow our truck breaks down; we can stand with our legs and hands broken.

[Cam.5.PU]

This example converges with Fiske’s argument that people respond to misfortune and suffering by interpreting them in terms of failure to act adequately or to comply with

¹³⁰ It is therefore interesting to observe that the notion of responsibility varies in function of its use to legitimate varying work-hours and rewards, versus when used to impute costs.

one or more of the patterns of the forms. Forms of exchange therefore echo Bourdieu's concept of habitus: they are structures and structuring elements of the practice, schemes of action and of interpretation. The use of particular forms shapes 'people's chief social conceptions, concerns, and coordinating criteria, their primary purposes and their principles' (Fiske, 1992: 689). Consequently, practices of exchange may self-reinforce and advocate for the adequacy of their principles of fairness, which act as schemes of apprehension of how things ought to be, as habitus acquired through practice.

Profit-seeking is used to reinforce and contribute to the mutual-assistance exchanges of both Umoja groups. Alongside the organisation of lucrative solidarity raffles, events, bazars, etc., members have decided to charge an interest rate for each loan, whose profits serve to cover unpaid debts. A member explains:

If for any reason the person cannot pay, we do a raffle to gather the closest amount to what that person owes, so we are helping that person the best way possible. She will worry [about the money she owes to the group], but at first, we will pay her instalment. Not because it is obliged, but because we want to help. You're helping that person.

[Umo.3]

Thanks to those group activities, personal savings are maintained and may be boosted, equally boosting the capability that members will develop through their group practice.¹³¹

NON-PROFIT-SEEKING USED TO REINFORCE PROFIT-SEEKING EXCHANGES

On the other hand and more systematically, non-profit-seeking exchanges consolidate profit-seeking ventures. As in the case of the Umoja group 1 (MdL), the mutual-assistance management of savings and loans boosts members' investment in their

¹³¹ Through such practices, members have also realised that they could carry out further 'proper economic strategies' [Part.1], such as investing into stockholding (project of Group 1, MdL) in order to boost their financial and mutual-assistance abilities.

self-entrepreneurial activity, and may importantly enhance their profit-seeking opportunities. A member of Umoja Group 1 [Umo. 1] comments:

I got my hairdressing chair that way, [through a loan]. (...) It was a really important thing, because my salon had no comfort (...), so I got it through the group.

Members of Umoja group 2 (SeA) also gain from their mutual-assistance relationship, through which they share their entrepreneurial strategies and analytical tools for sustaining their profit-seeking activity. For example, they advise each other about products or ways to sell:

For example, the person is selling ice cream. Then, we say:

- 'If you put some popcorn, put some sweets, would you not sell better?'

Then the person starts to think. And there you soon see a small market, a grocery stall starting. (...)

Most people (...) never know if what you're doing here is going to work. (...) But they dare trying, and when you need advice, the group arrives. We assess, propose something else:

- 'How is it like there in your street? What do you think people care more about?'

[Umo. 1]

They not only intervene financially when someone expresses a need, but also provide a wider knowledge to help the member to find a more empowering profit-seeking strategy.

Similarly, Camapet takes part in a regional union of nine scavengers' cooperatives, the Recycling Cooperative Complex of Bahia.¹³² They have shared an equal interest in the group, since their union gave them the ability to negotiate the prices of their sales (if not to prevent the 'social/ economic dumping' over their trade conditions). The complex clearly claims that the 'joint commercialisation of recyclable materials collected by the network

¹³² The 'Complexo Cooperativo de Reciclagem da Bahia – CCRB' gathers together 6 entities: Recicoop, Amigos do Planeta, Coopersf, Camapet, Canore e Ação Reciclar.

cooperatives, eliminates the middlemen and increases the income of the scavengers'

(Camapet, n.d.-b). The commercial administrator of Camapet described:

We saw that alone we would not be able to pursue, we would not get past certain obstacles¹³³. Then, came the idea of (...) a complex of scavenger cooperatives. (...) [Thanks to this,] today [Camapet] does not work with intermediaries, but directly with factories.

[Cam.5.PU]

Through the complex, the cooperatives reinforced their commercial advantage in the marketplace, becoming more influential and powerful actors by increasing and processing the production and reducing the competitive pitch between small actors. The use of an equality-matching partnership with peer cooperatives therefore moderates the empowering opportunities of the profit-seeking activity of Camapet. It ensures its profits, but also allows the cooperative to empower further their members.

Similarly, as in the case of Camapet, Utting et al. (2014: 7) reckon on the power of cooperation between cooperatives in order to master risks and improve their mutual position in the market:

When workers, producers and consumers organize collectively they can overcome market failures, enhance productivity, add value and build resilience by strengthening capacities and capabilities needed to mobilize resources, integrate markets on fairer terms and compete economically. Key in this regard are advantages related to cost reduction associated with economies of scale, value-added associated with processing and enhanced capacity of small producers to bargain for higher prices and access market information, transportation, distribution networks, technology and training.

However, they have expressed the fact that the need to manage uncertainties in profit-seeking, and the permanent pressure of market competition on third-sector actors – including SSEs – may endanger their social endeavours:

¹³³ By obstacle, the president of the Camapet refers to the low prices and value attributed to their recycled material by resellers, which present a disadvantage in their profit-seeking activity.

As SSE expands, it often becomes more immersed in market relations and global value chains, and thereby confronts a set of pressures that hitherto may have been minimal or non-existent. Such relations can shift the balance between efficiency and equity objectives. (...)

The emergence of what has been called coopitalism, comprising large-scale financial services, manufacturing and agricultural cooperatives, can blur the dividing line between big co-op and big business. (...) The challenge of having to compete with for-profit enterprise can be particularly difficult, as noted in the case of organized waste pickers in Brazil.

(Utting et al., 2014: 11)

As described earlier, it has for example effectively led to changes in the process of waste collection in Camapet. In such case, authors worry that profit-seeking endangers one's ability to pursue 'more solidary' exchanges. If it may have contradicted the local and political commitment to serve the neighbourhood, it has served the economic ability to ensure a stable wage to the members.

Non-profit exchanges appear, in the empirical data, to play a more unexpected role, in places thought to be dedicated only to profit-seeking exchanges. Traders reckon the mutual advantage of being gathered in the marketplace rather than pursuing a selling activity outside of it, in order to be identified by purchasers. It creates the need to be able to maintain this mutual and tacit cooperation between traders. Therefore, for most of the São Joaquim market traders, it is not the search for higher profit that is expressed as their foremost concern, but the maintenance of an equal opportunity to generate profit between themselves. To do so, the traders have decided to set a price for similar products. Equalising prices corresponds to the necessity to maintain a good relationship within the market place.

At the time of business, each one respects the limits. (...) When selling, you cannot sell a product cheap only to prevent your competitor from selling. I think this is unfair. (...) Here, in the São Joaquim market, there is deference to these limits. (...)

Inside the São Joaquim market, there is a relationship of friendship. Even if the person is your competitor, (...) there is respect. In trade relations, some want to burn one another... but here [in the market], for most of the stallholders, one always seeks [friendship]. (...)

Yet, in other segments [of the market], they work according to the demand, because they deal with perishable products, the product has to come and go [e.g. fruits and vegetables]. (...) This kind of product is a quite perilous, it pushes people to negotiate the sale with the clientele. There's not that honesty of working with non-perishable products.

[SJ-10-Union]

The practice of defining equal and non-concurrent prices corresponds to an equality-matching exchange that maintains traders' equivalent opportunity to generate profit over time. This is however limited to non-perishable products such as conditioned food and material objects. It is confirmed by the disdain expressed toward the unfair situation that selling perishable products entails. Traders also maintain further equality-matching exchanges when they borrow merchandise or money in case of shortfalls, when it comes to referring one another to clients or when repairing their 'alley' in the market place:

Most stallholders are my friends and they help me if I need. I never refuse [to help others]. If one came to ask for money, I'll help. If he lent me some, the next day I'll pay back. He would not want [to receive] a penny for interest. [I would do] the same thing for them. (...) We lend to each other.'

'In this street [of the market] everyone works with the same product. When lacking, one borrows [from the others].'

'[With the other stallholders], we're friends. When I am missing a product [in the stall], I already indicate another stall. [And they] would do the same thing. (...) In our part [of the market], that is how we work. [Rivalry] does not exist.

[S.J.1.SO]

Borrowing, lending, and recommending others' stalls are practices carefully reciprocated within similar conditions. Stall-keepers would also refuse to charge interest to each other. Merchants therefore tend to maintain the conditions of their opportunities for profit-making, rather than interpreting the form as imposing competition between actors.

Polanyi (1957a: 253) had quickly noted the presence of ‘reciprocity’ in profit-seeking exchanges:

reciprocity is sometimes attained through [market] exchange at set equivalencies for the benefit of the partner who happens to be short of some kind of necessities – a fundamental institution in ancient Oriental societies.

This is similar to what has been captured in the São Joaquim market.

In contrast with what Polanyi implies, non-profit-seeking exchanges are of importance in developmental market economies, despite the liberal cultural understanding of the use of the forms.¹³⁴ Even with the prominence of a cost-benefit analysis, profit-seeking exchanges rely on other forms of exchange. The latter helps entrepreneurs to maintain profit-seeking, since the form fails to offer control over the context necessary for profit-making, or to maintain their relation with their clients. Managing the uncertainty of exchange appears as a highly social activity, solved by the juxtaposition of profit-seeking with social compromises. Consequently, many experiences of the third-sector, known to value and use non-profit-seeking exchanges, have been studied regarding their capacity to enhance local economies, or as a way to recover from an economic crisis (See for example : Costa et al., 2012; Fernández, 2009; San-Jose et al., 2009; Thanou et al., 2013).

6.1.3. Dependencies

Finally, a stronger form of dependency between forms of exchange is observed to address unsolved distributive matters. By unsolved distributive matters, I refer to the distributive decisions created by a form of exchange, due to the patterns motivating and organising exchanges, but that this same form of exchange cannot resolve. As a consequence, they appeal for the use of another form of exchange. They appear in the data

¹³⁴ I will discuss this in the next section of this chapter.

from my empirical research to be characteristics of mutual exchanges, equal-opportunity, and profit-seeking exchanges. The nature of this last entanglement between forms expounds not only the inevitable dependence of the forms, but also its indeterminate and negotiated egalitarian standards. Not only does it shed light on the embeddedness of profit-seeking exchanges, it also illustrates similar tendencies and raises concerns regarding the undetermined egalitarian outcome of mutual-assistance and equal-opportunities exchanges.

MUTUAL-ASSISTANCE

Mutual-assistance exchanges set the momentum that is the negotiated conditions in which a group may intervene for the sake of other members, such as the criteria to access a loan in Umoja, or for rescuing practices in the case of the Uruguai fishermen. The form inscribes the predisposition to act and use all the resources available in behaviours. However, it leaves unsolved the nature and level of both, the member's contribution to the scheme and entitlement to the help provided. Those will depend on other forms of exchange, and a diverging interpretation of the danger that an unequal level of functioning represents for individuals or the group.

In the case of Umoja groups, we have demonstrated that the groups have adopted different policies of equality-matching to govern the savings of their members.¹³⁵ The lack of patterns guiding the allocation of resources, coupled with the limited financial ability of the group, influences the nature and levels of the loans provided. Group 1 (MdL) normally organises the rotation over the access to loan (equality-matching), but may sometimes affirm the intention to prioritize for one's 'greater need' and postpone further demands, adopting a status-led assessment (in this case a lack of resources):

¹³⁵ See section 5.1.1, p.172

We will combine not to bump into one another. [If it happens], we will talk. When there is money, we can loan to two people. When there is not, one has to give priority to the emergency.

[Umo. 5]

This interview abstract illustrates the alternating criteria and forms through which mutual-assistance are articulated in order to allocate loans. By contrast, group 2 (SeA) divides the available funds equally, regardless of the amount, amongst all those asking (equality-matching). The group's collective accumulation of economic capital also constitutes a postponed concern of distribution when a member wishes to quit. The groups then adopt a status-led exchange enabled by the notion and respect of a member's ownership: the exact amount of money the member has collectivised can be withdrawn with a member's participation in the scheme.

For the Uruguai fishermen, the identification of a risk or need one faces represents the obligation to act. To my understanding, they however did not discuss the way they should intervene since that does not represent a matter of distribution: whoever is present may and can intervene according to a householding form.

The distributive impact of the mutual-assistance exchange therefore does not make sense without understanding the contribution of other forms to resolving unsolved distributive matters. The form can be supporting and promoting disadvantaged people when someone fails to meet his needs, as for example, in the case of the Uruguai fishermen or the Umoja groups. Yet, mutual-assistance exchanges may be associated with a diverging interpretation of the danger (or virtue) that unequal levels of functioning represent for individuals or the group.

The analysis of space and criteria of contribution and allocation in the use of mutual-assistance makes sense of the differences between schemes of social protection, as for example, between social assistance programs¹³⁶ and social insurance programs¹³⁷.

In the case of social assistance programs, mostly provided by the state, the comprehensive collection of resources through taxes accounts for people's financial 'status', generally measured in proportion to their wage or consumption habits. Inversely, they offer non-contributory benefits through status-led exchanges that positively discriminate in favour low-income groups, or that target categories of vulnerability (Barrientos, 2010). When considering monetary resources for example, such combinations may seek to guarantee a minimum to everyone. They therefore allow the levelling of economic resources to a certain extent, even if this may fail to equate opportunities. Such combinations might finally prevent the appearance of disparate and undesired upward mobility through a status-led taxation such as taxes on high incomes, which downgrades, to a certain extent, people's unequal opportunities.¹³⁸

In the case of social insurance programs, people in a situation of risk receive an allocation proportional to their contribution. Beyond the state, it can be provided formally

¹³⁶ By social assistance, I refer to the model created by William Henry Beveridge, who in 1942 presented to the UK Parliament an inclusive social system of 'universal national solidarity' (Lautier, 2006) financed from the state budget. It constitutes 'direct, regular and predictable cash or in-kind resources transfers to poor and vulnerable individuals or households' (Arnold et al., 2011: 91). 'This is the primary form of social protection available in most developing countries' (Browne, 2015)

¹³⁷ By social insurance, I refer to the system created by the Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in 1883. It consisted in a statutory health insurance for employees contributing according to their income and professional status. Social insurance includes contributory pensions; health, unemployment, or disaster insurance; and funeral assistance (Norton, 2001).

¹³⁸ This does not mean that guaranteeing the redistribution of opportunities to disadvantaged people automatically leads to downgrading others'. For example, people can be assisted with the money gathered through equality-matching or profit-seeking exchanges such as in Umoja, or based on voluntary and spontaneous support such as for the householding management of the form in the Uruguai fishermen (which echoes the way charitable organisations may seek private support). Similarly, private insurances work on the combination of profit-seeking and mutual-assistance. Downgrading can be also imagined to apply without leading to upgrading others.

through a bank or employer, or informally through a community based pooled fund (Browne, 2015). National schemes generally consider one's occupational status to define his/her contribution and benefit, while in private insurances, benefits are respectively set according to the package to which one has subscribed. The scheme involves only those contributing and helps to maintain their standard of living, lifestyle and opportunities between peers, through a redistribution from well-off contributors to those in a situation of risk. Yet, 'social insurance is strongly linked to the formal labour market [or the financial resource that it allows], meaning [national and private] coverage is often limited to formal workers' (Browne, 2015). Mutual-assistance between homogeneous groups also means, in this case, the reproduction of groups' unequal set of opportunities over time. Moreover, in the case of private insurances, the collective gathering of resources not only serves the care for others, but also legitimates the profit-making of the enterprise managing the scheme over unused resources. Such a cost-benefit strategy may vary significantly between providers. Unlike national protection schemes, community-based saving methods 'are characterised by a high degree of "self-sufficiency, self-regulation and self-control"' (Balkenhol and Gueye, 1994: 7), which I interpret to be the self-reliance and self-support of homogeneous groups on their resources (rather than an extended scheme working across social groups, through which clear differences between the beneficiaries and the contributors appear).

Mutual-assistance may be coupled with equal-opportunity or status-led exchanges in order to fight an undesired form of lack of resources and functionings. At the other end of the spectrum, mutual-assistance and equal-opportunity may be used with a status-led form of exchange to establish prices, scholarships, grants and rewards based for example on one's merit. In those schemes, people may agree to accumulate resources collectively. They may agree to sponsor someone who is outstanding in terms of her achievements such as academic merit or civic distinction, rather than for a loss of opportunity. In this case,

mutual-assistance serves not to erase unequal resources or functionings, but to institutionalise symbolically or perceptibly those differences. The impact on social inequalities of those different uses of mutual-assistance will therefore relatively differ relatively to their articulation to other forms of exchange.

Mutual-assistance may not automatically set to prevent unequal resources or functionings between people. In function of its scale, it may maintain levels of inequalities between occupational statuses for example, or serve to distinguish particular achievements.

EQUAL-OPPORTUNITIES

Equal-opportunity exchanges also introduce unsolved distributive matters, and demand the diffusion of education and effective knowledge. The resolution of such unsolved matters can be achieved through householding (i.e. relative to one's unregulated access to resources and dispositions), status-led (e.g. according to one's economic capital), equal-opportunity (e.g. according to academic merits) or more likely, a complex combination of these. The diffusion of knowledge in equal-opportunity exchanges, through the assistance of either an egalitarian or an inegalitarian form, informs the real level of 'equal-opportunity' which one may effectively experience through the form. It will really explain the egalitarian outcome of the use of equal-opportunity. It offers a new perspective which converges with others' analyses that claims that the social outcomes of cooperatives depend to some extent on the nature of their education and training (MacPherson, 2003; Shaw, 2009, 2011; Woodin, 2011). Other authors associate education with the development of a co-operative voice, increased productivity and economic success (Chambo et al, n.d.; Fairbairn, 1999; Shaw, 2009; ILO, 2010). This is the case in Camapet, in which overlooking the need for a greater distribution of knowledge and incentive explains the low rate of rotation between members.

Similarly, equal-opportunity needs to be re-contextualised as the imperfect social outcome of the particular form of exchange, which we also have illustrated as introducing

unsolved distributive conflicts. The negotiation of the equal spaces of opportunities that the form has the potential to create, needs to be analysed in function of its association to other forms of exchange. In view of such findings, it would be worth discussing the confluence between profit-seeking exchange and equal-opportunity, as assumed in the liberal literature: To what extent does the selection of profiles in the labour market correspond to an 'equal-opportunity' or to a status-led exchange? Does it entail an optimal system of allocation of opportunities according to 'accepted' criteria of selection, which could exempt from the need for representation? To what extent would education assure this?

PROFIT-SEEKING

Profit-seeking exchanges may also not be sufficient on their own to close the distributive matters they try to address. Profits generated through collective arrangements request not only the repartition of the profit-making activity, that is one's symbolic and objective value added to the activity and/or one's effective contribution to the production of services and goods exchanged, but also the redistribution of profit between participants for example through wages and bonuses.¹³⁹ This also represents what I call 'unsolved distributive matters', and calls for its inevitable association of profit-seeking with other forms of exchange. Most of the time, the standard of justice that solves the appraisal of one's contribution to profits legitimates his/her levels of entitlement to profit. Both matters are generally highly entangled.

In the Uruguai Fishermen group, profit-making reintroduces the identity and the relationships between people as the main criterion for the negotiation of one's contribution to and reward through profit-making. Recognising the different social identities influences

¹³⁹ Another unsolved distributive matter of profit-seeking exchanges is apparent in the negotiation of prices, also based on a complex association with non-profit exchanges. This will be explored in Chapter 7.

the analysis of the value of one's economic contribution (material, time, etc.), or competence in the profit-making fishing activity. If some important material is borrowed from a non-fisherman, an indemnification is set in proportion of profits. This was usually around 30% of the catch for lending a boat according to the fishermen group members. The fishermen – often 3 to 4 per expedition – divide a lesser part since of the benefits: in this case, they share 70% of the profit left over. It corresponds to a status-led exchange, which endows an unequal value given to the stakeholders' contribution to profit. However, if the provider is himself a Uruguai fisherman, the differences between people's material contribution to profit-making are likely to be flattened (overlooking one's different material contribution) and the profit equally shared (equality-matching). However, the Uruguai fishermen may negotiate the value of their unequal contribution to the catch of each trip. Some fishermen would agree to mark fish and to get the benefits of their individual catch (status-led) – more particularly when constituting a new crew. Others would rather divide equally the benefits of the catch with their colleagues (equality-matching).

In the São Joaquim market, a cultural significance is given to the act of initiating and investing in a new profit-making activity. The unequal recognition of one's participation in profit-making (despite the fact that they may have the same daily occupation) grants 'ownership' over the profit realised and hence the unequal entitlement in the redistribution of profits:

You want to [have an estimate of] how much owners and employees earn? (...) It [may] change, but on average employees earn 800 reals. (...) The owner much more, I think three times more.

[S.J.5.Emp.]

By contrast, which can be imputed to its insertion within the third sector, and due to its diverging doxa, Camapet does not endorse an 'individualistic' definition of the initiation and investment in profit-seeking, but values the equal contribution of its workers.

In Camapet, profit-seeking has been associated with an equal participation in the creation and share of profits.¹⁴⁰ Profit-seeking can therefore involve and serve a collective through the association of the form with equality-matching for example. As I will develop later, (sub-)fields can be understood to promote more or less egalitarian socio-cultural norms and patterns of recognition and redistribution, rather than fair institutions as such.

THE EMBEDDEDNESS OF PROFIT-SEEKING

The ‘independent’ nature of the market poses a question. Polanyi and other authors after him (Carruthers and Babb, 2013; Granovetter, 1985; White, 1981) have illustrated that the adoption of markets, as a form of integration, has been the result of many social dynamics led by the state or a consequence of movements of urbanisation. Polanyi (1944: 148) moreover denounced ‘the concept of a self-regulating market [as] utopian, [whose] progress was stopped by the realistic self-protection of society’. He associated the former movements with the struggle against the dis-embeddedness of society. This constitutes a critique of the liberal assumption that markets exist autonomously as free-markets¹⁴¹. He denounces the ‘fiction’ that the market’s operation is self-efficient. Moreover, this leads to the conclusion, similar to Massey (2006: 120), that ‘[i]f markets are constituted [in the sense of instituted] by societies in which they are embedded, then there is no inherently

¹⁴⁰ Yet, we have argued earlier that the allocation of profit also echoes the different responsibilities (and working hours) of the workers, which are reasonably levelled by the adoption of an equal hour-wage. Therefore, the generation and distribution of profit is set through a complex mix of equal-opportunity, equality-matching and status-led exchanges.

¹⁴¹ Polanyi therefore presented a critique to the

[t]he pairing of the words ‘free’ and ‘market’ [, which] suggests that markets somehow, [are a] state of nature, and that in the absence of human interference they will operate smoothly and effectively, as natural processes do. [By showing the role of the states, his book therefore represented a powerful critique to the idea that] human actions undertaken to influence market outcomes represent unwarranted ‘interventions’ that artificially constrain a naturally functioning system. (...) [It challenged the idea that] actions undertaken to influence markets are more commonly seen as detrimental, undermining, however good one’s intentions.

(Massey, 2006: 117)

correct number, distribution, or nature of markets.’ Polanyi also opposes the idea that markets cannot ‘produce the greatest good for the greatest number’ (Massey, 2006: 117).

However, Polanyi reintroduces the idea that the market is regulated according to an independent rationale. ‘The market system Polanyi speaks of entails economic action for the sole purpose of gaining money and regulating economic action through prices’ (Sparsam et al., 2014: 3). Polanyi criticizes the fact that this rationale leads to ‘evil’, even if the diffusion of this ‘evil’ has been the consequence of a social process.

All evil arises from treating [money, land and labour] as commodities because their sole utilization as production factors threatens the existence of mankind and nature. (...)

[Effectively, f]or Polanyi making profit is entirely unnatural and does not correspond with actual human nature and human needs.

(Sparsam et al., 2014: 3)

On the contrary, he thinks that the social protection of the society, through the use of ‘embedded’ exchanges, rescues the society from the damages that the market can create.

The correlation between economic crisis and the development of the third-sector has fed a Polanyian interpretation of the opposition and complementarity between market and ‘protective’ forms of exchange. Kousis and Paschou (2014: 82) especially demonstrated that ‘waves of ‘*économie sociale*’ and solidarity practices have emerged and re-emerged, especially since the industrial revolution/ 19th century, in reaction to economic threats, exploitative relations and poverty faced by considerable segments of populations.’

On the contrary, I argue that profit-seeking exchanges are embedded, since they automatically depend on others form to happen. I also argue that the embeddedness of the form in social norms would not matter as such to prevent ‘evil’. If we are concerned with the fight against capability deprivation and for the egalitarian promotion of people’s capabilities, then it matters to negotiate egalitarian standards for profit-seeking. It means understanding its implementation in association with other forms, similarly to mutual-

assistance and equal-opportunity exchanges. Those three forms, because of the unsolved distributive matters that they introduce, are effectively distinct from equality-matching and status-led exchanges in the sense that they are indeterminate and negotiated egalitarian standards. This not only sheds light on the embeddedness of profit-seeking exchanges, it also illustrates similar tendencies and raise concerns with regard to the undetermined egalitarian outcome of mutual-assistance and equal-opportunities exchanges.

Profit-seeking as such is not bound to serve individualistic purposes and a search for social distinction, that is, one's willingness to distinguish oneself positively, to stand out from the crowd thanks to a better social and symbolic condition (Bourdieu, 1984). The necessity to solve unsolved distributive matters re-embeds the pursuit of profit in social structures, and the unequal social treatment of individuals around notions of 'merits', 'needs' and 'dues' for example. The high dependence of the form with non-profit-exchanges challenges Polanyi's perception of market exchanges as dis-embedded from social norms. Moreover, the potential array that the uses of profit-seeking represent for the reproduction of an equal to unequal access to resources and functions challenges the notion of a 'trickle down' of growth.

On the one hand, and despite the fact that a cost-benefit analysis may allow profit-seekers at first not to encompass social actors' relative social position, profit-seeking is not completely dis-embedded from the social norms that account for one's identity, value or legitimate rewards.¹⁴² The association of profit-seeking with particular non-profit-seeking exchanges reintroduces objective and symbolic accounts of one's participation in the

¹⁴² If Polanyi demonstrated the embeddedness of the process of adoption of market as a form of exchange, he supposed that they were led by an independent rationale, i.e. the search for profit. I discuss here the assumed 'self-ruling' logic of the form, rather than its subordination to institutional processes.

activity.¹⁴³ Profit-seeking is in that sense more complex than freely random exchanges between people, such as drawn by Schaniel and Neale (2000)¹⁴⁴, or leading to a simple commutation of employees such as argued by Servet (2007). Moreover, I suspect that the misleading belief in the opposition between ‘market’ and ‘embedded’ exchanges, the understanding of market exchanges in abstraction from social norms, may have had led to overlooking the distributive conflicts created by profit-seeking and the relative games of power that lie behind them. Such a fortuitous assumption may have constituted a great leeway for the liberal doxa to get away with claiming the ‘self-regulation’ of the market and its intrinsic fairness.

On the other hand, profit-seeking should not be directly associated with the reproduction of social inequalities. It is not the pursuit of profit by itself that might create inequalities, but the opportunity and value of one’s participation in profit-making and access to the benefits.¹⁴⁵ Therefore, the association of profit-seeking with other forms of exchange, and their corresponding ‘standards of justice’, is primordial to the understanding of the complex impact of profit-making exchanges over the unequal empowerment of people. Such a statement interestingly challenges the controversial but long-lasting understanding of the relationship between growth and socio-economic development, that is,

¹⁴³ I believe however that the degree of ‘re-embeddedness’ of profit-seeking may be relative and may vary in different circumstances. Therefore, I believe that the possibility of reinvesting profits into a profit-making activity, may have the potential to create a social distance between the individuals involved in the creation of profit and those that benefit from those profits. In this case, I believe that the beneficiary of the profit could more easily overlook the identity of others involved in the generation of profit and, beyond the potential to exponentially multiply one’s resources, may be a pretext for the ‘rules of the market’ as a way to justify a social dumping.

¹⁴⁴ See Figure 1, p.19

¹⁴⁵ I suspect ‘utility-satisfaction’, similarly to profit-seeking or mutual-assistance exchanges, to be an incomplete form, and to rely on other exchanges to resolve further distributive matters such as how to access satisfaction rather than the motive to create an exchange. Furthermore, I suspect that it is the fruit of a combination of both profit-seeking and utility-satisfaction, along with the transcription of values into money, that have facilitated the rules of the supply and demand, such as theorised by Marshall (1890 (2012)).

the accumulation of profit and its economic, material and immaterial outcome, and more particularly the relationship between growth and poverty alleviation¹⁴⁶ captured under the term trickle-down¹⁴⁷. Therefore, I argue that the trickle-down effect of growth is not an intrinsic characteristic of profit-seeking exchanges. The search for profit has the potential to account for wider distributive concerns through its combination with other forms of exchange. Such an explanation converges with the findings of the study led by SURI et al. (2010) who illustrate that ‘in order to reach a virtuous cycle of sustained growth, accompanied by continuous improvements in human development, priority attention must be given to the latter’. Therefore, I argue that to understand the pro-poor outcome of redistribution of growth produced through profit-seeking, we should reconsider the distributive solutions adopted to solve the unsolved yet central distributive matters created by profit-seeking. We should re-examine the other forms with which profit-seeking is combined, and which guide both the unequal access to profit-making, and the distribution of profits.

Such an understanding of the embeddedness of profit-seeking as an incomplete pattern of action, helps to make precise the nature of the growth-distribution relation, and the potential to create and distribute profit equally. However, it is unlikely that a profit-seeking exchange will produce an egalitarian distribution over time:

‘the trickle down mechanism is not sufficient to eventually reach an efficient distribution of resources, even in the best possible scenario. [For example, through loans or employment contracts, through which the authors analyse the eventual mechanism,] [p]ersistent wealth inequalities arise because investment

¹⁴⁶ The concern about the distribution of growth was introduced by Kuznets in the 1950s, and later endorsed by the World Bank, which has later attempted to associate growth with equity in the 1980s, or with a pro-poor distribution in the 1990s. As argued earlier, Sen’s CA has allowed a shift of such concern by offering to consider poverty as multidimensional rather than only being a material concern, and to refocus the means and the ends of development toward insuring people’s freedom, rather than the pursuit of growth. [For a short historical summary of development economics, see Ranis (2004)]

¹⁴⁷ See footnote 18

projects generate random returns and entrepreneurs do not insure themselves perfectly against this income risk.’

(Aghion and Bolton, 1997: 151-2).

6.1.4. The social and cultural embeddedness of forms of exchange

The empirical data has illustrated that the arrangement between forms of exchange can be of different natures such as summarised in the table below: ¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ I do not pretend here to present a comprehensive account of the practical limits of the different forms of exchange. My methodological approach was not designed to cover entirely this point. Yet, it appeared as a result from the empirical data, which aimed at uncovering the (ir)regular structural influence of exchanges over the mediation of capabilities. For example, I suspect ‘utility-satisfaction’ to be a form of exchange guided by the search for the greatest satisfaction at a lower ‘cost’. (The use of the word ‘cost’ here is metaphoric and does not imply a monetary/ market exchange.)

Moreover, I tend to think that profit-makers find in the implicit rules of the ‘labour market’, a means to pay people in a concurrent, minimal and stable way, through ‘utility-satisfaction’ rather than considering their direct participation to profit-making (except in the example of bonuses). Employees are treated relatively to the economic and cultural value of their skills, time, etc., which are considered as a need to pursue profitmaking exchanges rather than a direct contribution to profitmaking. The employers’ entitlement is relative to (the variable) profits (and activities), while employees’ is relative to the (stable and commutable) need to keep the activity going, set through the value of occupations in the labour market. It feeds unequal dynamics of reproduction of inequalities. This however contrasts with the organisation of family enterprises, which may directly share the profit – whether equally or proportionally.


Forms of exchange	Degree of entanglement 		
	Transition over time	Juxtapositions	Dependence created by unsolved distributive matter
Mutual-assistance	- necessity to introduce new members to a full access to the exchange, when trust is not yet established	- Profit-seeking strategies may boost the empowering potential of non-profit-seeking exchanges	- to solve the contribution to the exchange - to solve the delivery of help or benefices the exchange enables
Equal-opportunity	- tendency to be transformed into status-led exchanges		- to solve the contribution to the exchange - to solve the delivery of help or benefices that the exchange enables
Profit-seeking		- Non-profit exchanges help to manage uncertainties of profit-seeking exchanges	- to deliver equal opportunity: incentive to knowledge and education

TABLE 9: CAUSES AND NATURE OF THE ENTANGLEMENT OF FORMS OF EXCHANGE (NON-EXHAUSTIVE)

As shown above, each form presents limits. Profit-seeking is prone to be articulated with non-profit exchange to offer a control over profit-making uncertainties, and to solve the collective generation and distribution of profits. Mutual-assistance may be articulated over time in status-led exchanges to reach the level of trust necessary to include a new member, it gains from profit-seeking strategies, while it demands addressing the contribution and redistribution of benefits to members. Similarly, we saw that equal-opportunity might lean toward status-led exchange, notably if the need to maintain equal-opportunity through an

educational system is weakened.¹⁴⁹ Such combination of forms of exchange yet depends on previous choices: for example, the necessity to adapt the introduction of new members to full access to the mutual-assistance exchange only matter when the distribution of help is proportional to one's voluntary reimbursement (such as in Umoja) rather than mensal contribution (in private insurances) or statutory right (in social assistance).

The assessment of the spaces and motives of unequal empowerment invites the comparison of the different combinations of forms. Recognising the different ways in which profit-seeking is articulated in other forms of exchange, for example, converge with the approach offered by Bergeron and Healy (2015: 14). They call for 'letting go of a monolithic vision of economy' in order to 'recognize the diversity of alternative enterprises (...) alternative systems of finance (...) as well as motivations of care, interdependence, community aid etc. [which are] not inevitably reproducing neoliberal capitalism'. It allows the understanding of the negotiation of socially progressive relations of exchanges and empowerment as fluid, multiple, and not only the result of 'resistance' in the third-sector.

This may also explain why changes in the distribution of capabilities mediated through exchanges may evolve slowly, because they are inserted into an organically complex organisation that is a chain of habitual dependency between forms of exchange

¹⁴⁹ 'Equality-matching' also interrogates many assumption associated with the notion, often associated with and legitimating the 'open competition' in the liberal market, thought as guaranteeing the most optimal management of people and goods. One question is therefore how these different forms of exchange are related. Equal-opportunity exchanges appear as responding to patterns independent from profit-seeking exchanges. However, we saw that the particular combination of profit-seeking exchanges and equality matching in setting, such as pursued for example, in the São Joaquim market, may allow a certain form of equal-opportunity. However, such reality may be rather exceptional and may not perfectly fulfil the conditions present in the form of exchange. In the earlier example, market allows a general adoption of transversal criteria of discrimination (equal price) in spite of decision-making processes. They may however be more easily inclined to deviances, through allowing conflict of power enabled by the laws of the demand and supply to take place.

In this sense, the categorisation offered here is not only purely analytical, but also allows a discussion of the substantive reality of implemented patterns. It would be interesting to question the continuity between those forms of exchange, such as to enquire into the extent in which the market sector may also provide forms of equal opportunities.

and between actors. Yet, it suggests that any small change may induce ongoing dynamics of adaptation rather than the immobility of institutions.

6.2. Cultural interpretations of forms of exchange and of their association with capabilities

Polanyi (1944: 48-9) reckoned that integrations assume that individuals are involved in voluntary interdependences complying with global societal rules. He also noted that the involvement of societies in particular forms of exchange evolved over time. However, he neither investigated how social rules condition or apply through exchanges, particularly in a developmental context, nor expanded on how it modifies people's experience and empowerment.

The data illustrates that forms of exchange first respond to doxic perceptions and fragmentations of distributive matters, and the association between distributive concerns and specific forms of exchange. Exchanges encompass cultural definitions, norms of recognition and of rewards of people's legitimate attributes. This section therefore revisits the 'exchange - capability' relation described earlier, but introduces situations that illustrate the further impact of cultural appreciations of legitimate exchanges, or their appropriate levels of empowerment in the 'exchange - capability' relation. The data effectively illustrates further that the exchanges and resources that they mediate are subject to cultural appreciations and restrictions regarding their use and empowering role. Simultaneously, we attribute different social values to forms of exchange themselves, which explains their disproportional use, along with conditioning their more or less empowering rewards. The nature and unequal levels of 'social distribution' of capabilities in society therefore depends on the evolving social dynamics of involvement in exchanges that Polanyi had started to describe. This section consequently argues that the cultural interpretation, adaptation and adoption of the use of forms of exchange matter for making

sense of how exchanges may unequally enable or facilitate people's capabilities in society.

Such interpretation converges with the perception of capabilities as socio-historical.

6.2.1. Field-specific combinations of exchange

The empirical data suggests that the use of different forms of exchange corresponds to the different tasks that a practice of exchange in a group or in a wider social sphere may require. However, it has been possible to map the different forms of exchange (e.g. fishing, dividing profits and lending material to the others for the Fishermen), which appear as basic structures 'arranged' to achieve collective ends within groups. Uncovering specific combinations of forms of exchange, and the social relationships that people may develop through them, makes sense of some notions such as gift, wages, help, loan, debt, credit, etc., but also, of particular institutional definitions.

Community-based saving methods, as illustrated by the Umoja groups in this study, may be understood as the association of the central use of mutual-assistance with the act of gathering economic resources and providing loans. This is the case of ROSCAS in Senegal, which 'allows members to save very small amounts of money and at a pre-established rhythm' Balkenhol and Gueye (1994: 2).

The use of mutual-assistance can be illustrated under similar characteristics, since unsolved distributive matters of the form are primarily resolved through equality-matching or equal-opportunity. However, as illustrated in the case of Umoja, the criteria to which they are applied may differ. Balkenhol and Gueye (1994: 3) for example, distinguish in Senegal the allocation of resources 'by balloting or by direct allocation', while acknowledging the 'attribution by auction', to 'often appear in other parts of the world'.

Such definition allows other variations beyond the definition of a rhythm and quantities of the amount saved and criteria of allocation, but also according to the social

context and to the use of the scheme. In rural areas, they may be used by a village in order to finance social investments 'like wells, mosques, etc.' (Balkenhol and Gueye, 1994: 3).

Balkenhol and Gueye (1994: 3) also observe that differing from neighbourhood schemes, such has been seen in Umoja, the delegation of the administration and authority setting may be required and treated as a distributive matter in 'company-based, "modern" tontines'. Therefore,

[i]n compensation for his services the tontine manager is in some cases (...) entitled to participate in a cycle without having to make a contribution, (...) [or] giv[en] a small amount of money (...) in recognition for the services; [and may gain the] honour and social status that goes with the function.

This translates as the possible attribution of a different role and status to the manager.

Cooperatives of production can be identified as actors of the market economy which try to adopt equal-opportunity in their decision-making process, and equality-matching in sharing of the labour and its revenues. However, the high degree of adoption of profit-making patterns with regard to equality-matching or equal-opportunity allocation of roles and rewards may challenge their common title. Therefore, some came to distinguish 'politically-driven' from 'market-driven cooperatives' (Lemaître, 2013; Lemaître and Helmsing, 2012) as categories of organizations relying on resources stemming from either reciprocity, e.g. through voluntary work, or the search for profit. The notion of cooperative only makes sense in a comparative approach to the use of profit-seeking in the mainstream labour-market. Spaces in which a strict status-led distribution of roles and wages are justified and applied (e.g. for responsibility versus hierarchical functions) serve to distinguish cooperatives, and at a more global scale the solidarity economy, from mainstream liberal labour and economic market.

Finally, I argue that the tendency to use particular combinations of forms of exchange for comparable distributive matters helps to make sense of the conceptual (sub)division and continuities sectors of the economy. Understanding complex exchange

arrangements can help to solve the puzzle associated with defining the third-sector, whose 'intrinsic characterization (...) poses real difficulties. It is based (...) on 'regulations', which meaning should be clear (...). But the understanding of these 'logics' or the 'regulations' is not obvious' (François, 2008: 63). Such an approach helps to grasp and to discuss the difference between groups of exchange, and to extend the discussion to the 'exchange - (un)equal capability' relation that they allow.

6.2.2. Symbolic values of forms of exchange and fields

As Fiske (1992: 689) claims, '[p]eople construct complex and varied social forms using combinations of these models implemented according to diverse cultural rules.' The adoption and combination of forms of exchange however depends on the sociocultural context, i.e. the fields in which they are applied. Bourdieu's concepts of doxa and fields help us to understand sectors of the economy as social spaces that legitimate a particular combination of forms of exchange. However, the (combination of) forms of exchange must be resituated in the legitimate understanding and symbolic position of actors and practices in and across sub-fields in order to make sense of their socially promoted or diminished strength to empower, that is the cultural interpretation of the role, value, reward and the empowering levels (rather than patterns) attached to (combinations of) forms of exchange.

Forms of exchange (and their combination) can themselves suffer from a low value and legitimacy in the doxa of a field. This seems particularly so in the case of the Salvador's recycling material market field. The main actors of this subfield adopt a mainstream liberal doxa, which value profit-seeking over other forms of exchange. They tend to disregard and penalise other exchange arrangements, labelled as deviant. For example, according to the actors of Camapet, the resellers devalue the price of their reclaimed goods for two related reasons:

Our business partners (...) actually disqualify us. (...) *As [Camapet] is not into the chain of waste purchase.* (...) Many of these enterprises and intermediaries want to lower the value of cooperatives (...). Because *they think we are exempt from taxes*, free from a lot of things. But it's not true, it's a struggle. Today we pay the same taxes as other businesses, you know...

[Cam.6.Adm] (Emphasis added)

On the one hand, the intermediaries, the profit-making company specialised in gathering recycling material for the industry, resist acknowledging cooperatives as legitimate actors of the recycling industry, because they act aside from the 'chain of purchase'. They devalue the fact that people have acquired the recycling material for free. They effectively rely on non-profit-seeking exchanges (householding or status-led), rather than an utility-satisfaction¹⁵⁰ mediated by a monetary bargaining, and this, despite the social, time and economic effort that the previous exchanges encompass. On the other hand, intermediaries consider that the cooperative's products have lesser economic value because they see tax exemptions or other governmental support, which they assume is granted to the cooperative, as illegitimate. Camapet's conformity to what seems to be defended as the legitimate rules of the market game, illustrates the fact that non-profit and non-buying exchanges are prohibited and devalued within the market field. Both the access to resources for free and the recourse to governmental redistribution disqualify scavenger cooperatives in the market field. Market actors feel it appropriate to penalise Camapet (and its peers) through lower prices. This shows that forms of exchange hold a symbolic value and echo the legitimate cultural order of practices within each field, whose recognition and reward lead to the reproduction of a social hierarchy. It therefore seems that markets may represent a more open and more competitive field of struggle such as Bourdieu defined it. As Massey (2006: 120) states, 'markets are nothing more than competitions between

¹⁵⁰ See footnotes 109 and 148

citizens that occur within particular arenas according to specific rules. By building arenas and defining rules, societies necessarily regulate competition and constrain outcomes.'

Similarly to the previous example, the 'solidarity' and charitable sector, understood and legitimated through its opposition to the market-sector, corresponds to a taboo for this sector to use profit-seeking. Pallotta (2013) explains:

We have two rulebooks — one for charity and one for the rest of the economic world. We blame capitalism for creating huge inequities in our society, and then we refuse to allow the 'non-profit' sector to use the tools of capitalism to rectify them.

This means that it precludes the charity sector, more particularly, to pursue legitimately profit-making exchanges. According to the same author, this is what prevents the sector from growing and effectively achieving its aims, such as providing health to the poor and fighting inequalities.

Yet, cultural constraints and individuals and groups' strategies of recognition¹⁵¹ may appear contradictory. For example, if the Umoja project aims to promote small local entrepreneurship as a way to oppose to the leadership of big actors of the market field, the Umoja Group 2 (SeA) for example, does not feel ethical constraints in pursuing such combat, and are on the contrary, debating the strategy of placing their collective money in the stock exchange. People's empowerment therefore echoes the social and cultural values and opportunities associated with their life-style, which translate into their situated use of (combination of) forms of exchange.

¹⁵¹ This will be developed in section 7.2, p.271

6.2.3. The social appreciation of the empowering role or value of forms of exchange

At another level, the resources that specific forms of exchange mediate may suffer from a low cultural value and constraints. However, beyond the forms of exchange, and beyond the association between forms of exchange with specific distributive matters to be enforced, cultural norms may constrain and limit the access to direct/ indirect functionings. For example, they may restrain members' capabilities to use the material resources an exchange may mediate. This is the case in Umoja groups, for which the normative use of the loan narrows down the use and the meaning of the money lent. Consequently, this limits members' access to different functions. For example, members of group 1 (MdL) respect the rules of parsimony when demanding loans and when using such money. This differs from the more flexible way in which Group 2 (SeA) uses a loan, since it is concerned with maintaining members' ability to consume:

Some [members] plan to buy a computer. In my case, I am paying monthly the fees of the college in which I was studying. Some others bought a basic food basket. A woman bought a cooker. Another woman who was selling hot-dogs sought to increase her production. So each one, at a time, had an objective for getting a loan.

[Umo.5]

The collective understanding of the exchange not only supports, but also constrains people's sets of resources and opportunities to function. As Wilson (2006: 115) notes,

[i]mposed or voluntarily restrictions on the actions of members of the community increase differences in behaviour and outlook and may limit opportunities for economic and social advancement. This limited opportunity creates situations in which social factors, (...) shape the attributes of individual members of the community – such as their motivations, attitudes, and skills – which in turn affect their social outcomes, including their social mobility.

This means that people's schemes of perception and action developed through exchanges encompass, beyond their habitual use of distributive matters and forms, additional norms constraining the use and empowerment of forms of exchange. This restrains agents' choices and opportunities, thus limiting the reach of their different functionings. As

Fineman (2006: 148-9) explains, the resources obtained through arrangements of forms of exchange can also become stigmatising:

[i]n complex modern societies no one is self-sufficient, either economically or socially. Whether the subsidies we receive are financial (such as in government transfer programs or favourable tax policy) or nonmonetary (such as those provided by the uncompensated labor of others in caring for us and our needs), we all live subsidized lives.

(...) The interesting question is why some subsidies are differentiated and stigmatised while others are hidden. Subsidies to market institutions and middle-class families are called 'investments', incentives', or 'earned', when government supplies them, but deemed 'gifts', 'charity', or the product of 'familial love' when they are contributions of caretaking labor.

The legitimacy of the resources one has depicts the legitimacy of the forms from which they are issued. Exchanges and functions create unequal social debts, or nurture social independences, according to the social representation of the forms. They greatly echo the unequal levels of recognition that actors may encounter in their restrained opportunity to evolve in future exchanges.

The social hierarchy and the cultural context in which exchanges takes place, limit people's sets and levels of capabilities. The nature and unequal levels of 'social distribution' of capabilities in society therefore depend on the evolving social and cultural dynamics of involvement in exchanges that Polanyi had started to describe.

6.2.4. Socio-historical capabilities

Exchanges are structures of opportunities constantly negotiated by the sociocultural understanding of people's legitimate criteria of recognition and relative treatment. Cultural changes in the definition and perception of those criteria, or in the value of one's involvement in (combinations of) exchanges, appear as fundamental dynamics contributing to people's empowerment.

The São Joaquim traders illustrate that actors of the market-sector suffer greatly from a restriction, or gain freedom from such shifts. The high influence of the fluctuations in the

perception of the practices of the São Joaquim market traders over their sets and levels of opportunities pertinently illustrates the cultural representation of the 'exchange - capability' relation. For example, improvements or degradations of the conditions in which market traders may function have reflected the 'cultural' settings that enable exchange to take place, and shape people's capabilities.

Market activities were for a long time unregulated activities: they were legal (trade is not illegal or illicit), legitimate activities, but stayed informal (market trader activity corresponded neither to an official professional status, nor to relative social rights). During the 1990s, endorsing the dominant development paradigm, the state perceived informal markets through their ability to absorb the surplus of the workforce at time of recession (Lautier, 2004). They were thought to regulate formal markets, particularly at a time of financial crisis. This has legitimated the pursuit of a policy of flexibilization of the labour market, without regulating the activity of the informal market. The government's ignorance of the challenges faced by the market sellers, and their difficulty to meet them without governmental supervision, has led to the progressive degradation of the marketplace:

The marketplace entered a very large degradation process because the vendors were selling alone, abandoned by the government. They were making the sale of their products in their own way, with no intervention of sanitary surveillance. (...) The marketplace got very marginalized. There were many drug-addicts; it was a point for drugs. People got a certain fear. The marketplace most often is frowned upon.

[S.J.10.Union]

This degradation as a consequence, further damaged the wider population's perception of the market place and its activity. Raising prejudices, feelings of fear and disdain along with a low degree of comfort and services, have diverted the clients away:

The infrastructure of the fair is weak. If you need a bathroom here, you have to go down there... People come but see a lot of dirt. Hence, today they go to supermarkets: they find everything you have here and with higher quality and hygiene. Then the marketplace lost a lot like this.

[S.J.3.Emp]

However recently, actors of the São Joaquim market have been benefited by touristic and patrimonial policies and have gained legitimacy in relation to the labour market's ability to provide employment. Firstly, because opportunities to access a job in the labour market became scarce, working as a stand-keeper slowly became a real valued option. Seen as a new opportunity to earn one's livelihood, it improved the social value of the profession. A stand-keeper explains:

At that time let's say, (...) working in the market came with much prejudice. Today the market does not [carry such prejudices anymore]. (...) Today, (...) [since] being [formally] hired is difficult, people go unemployed, they try to become traders. (...) [It turned to be an] alternative and a worker activity. (...)

Formerly there were distinctions. People who saw the stall keepers would say:

- 'Wow, that person is a stall keeper...!' [disdainful tone]

Today we have value, stall keepers, as any trader.

[S.J.9.SO]

The market workers gained a greater social value than before because of the negative evolution of the level of insertion in the labour market. Secondly, the state undertook a project of revitalisation of the market place, as part of the preparation for the 2014 FIFA world cup and the Olympic Games. In early 2014, when the restructuring of the market was just starting, members could yet anticipate that the revitalisation would bring further redistributive opportunities and invert the previous process of degradation:

I think that since the market is going through this process of revitalization, we [São Joaquim stall-keepers] are now being valued. (...) [The government] will intervene to give us the opportunity to work correctly, give us a chance, give us the equipment [we need] and will then makes us pay. (...) In the future, we will enlarge our clientele because we will be selling products of a better quality and with the appropriate equipment.

[S.J.10.Union]

The rehabilitation of the market place is a form of guarantee for the traders of the conditions to pursue their profit-seeking activity, up to the standard associated with the practice such as working in a clean environment. The trader quoted above expresses that it is a new way to be valued. Yet, other traders are conscious that the renewal of interest in the market activity, as a cultural and a touristic patrimony staged for the 2014 events, may be a fragile social and political victory, rather than a permanently-granted attention and recognition of the importance of their activity:

There is a project [revitalization]. We know that it was a lure. They really wanted this place for the Cup. But, politicians have the rationale of those who come and go away.

[S.J.3.Emp]

This trader already worries about the ephemeral support that the intervention may represent. This leads to another question that may be of importance in the CA, regarding the nature and the strength that a freedom to function guarantees in society, away from the agency of the agents that are concerned. This example moreover introduces the determining role of three central fields, the economic, political and wider social field, as shaping cultural perception of legitimate practices and of the empowering opportunities that exchanges may offer.

Cultural understanding influences not only their opportunity to operate in a social context, but also the degree of empowerment that people may attain through exchange. It constitutes the socio-cultural arrangements that, beyond the actor, 'change the structures and transform them into structures enabling individual human beings to acquire agency and exercise choice' (Deneulin, 2008a: 119). Such 'socio-historical structures' constitute a context that enable (or entails) people's 'socio-historical agency'.

6.3. Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the following question: *To what extent do forms of exchange structure people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities?*

It has argued that the (in)egalitarian outcomes of forms of exchange are confronted by two limits. On the one hand, people may negotiate the principles of fairness of each form through their complex association with other forms of exchange. On the other hand, the 'forms of exchange - capability' relation is subject to a sociocultural interpretation of the value and empowering role of the forms of exchange. Both elements greatly influence the forms of exchange' structure of people's unequal empowerment in capabilities.

Firstly, the complex arrangement of forms of exchange – whether lean toward other forms over time, juxtaposing to reinforce practices or to resolve unsolved distributive matters – modifies or reinforces the nature and intensity of exchanges' inequalitarian empowering outcome. The chapter therefore has argued that understanding the structural arrangement of forms of exchange is important, more particularly when accounting for profit-seeking, equal-opportunity and mutual-assistance exchanges, since these shape people's unequal empowerment.

Secondly, sociocultural definitions of people's legitimate attributes, and their relative processes of recognition and rewards through exchanges, or of the value of (combinations of/or forms of) exchanges, sharpen the patterns and intensity of people's unequal empowerment. The chapter has additionally argued that the cultural interpretation and adaptation of the use of forms of exchange therefore matters in order to make sense of how exchanges may unequally enable or facilitate people's capabilities. Highlighting such dynamics, the chapter has provided a new understanding of capability deprivation, as the effect of the complex arrangement of forms of exchange and patterns of distribution, which

may be reinforced through the doxic understanding of the forms of exchange and legitimate contexts of empowerment.

Alongside the arrangements of forms of exchange and their cultural understanding discussed in this chapter, the agency of people and groups also matter in shaping their unequal level of capabilities. If forms of exchange allow people to function, they also affect their opportunity aspect of freedom, 'the levers of control in one's own hands' (Sen, 1993: 522). They enable, as well as they limit agent's opportunity to be and do through exchange along with unequally shaping their different agency. The following chapter investigates this last element to complete the analysis of the 'exchange - capability' relation.

Chapter 7. **Agency over the ‘exchange - capability’ relation**

Chapter 6 has illustrated that forms of exchange do not represent clear-cut or forthright patterns for making sense of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation. The complex entanglement of forms of exchange and their cultural interpretation influence the way that exchanges enable, facilitate or set diverging levels of resources and functionings, which matter in order to understand the intensity or nature of their inequalitarian outcome. The social structure that exchanges represent for enabling functionings and facilitating people’s unequal capabilities is complex and equivocal, allowing the possibility of different meanings and social outcomes.

However, chapter 7 will argue that, people’s agency matters in shaping their relative set of capabilities. Here, agency refers to people’s and groups’ power over the realisation of their valued objectives. Such agency operates through mastering exchanges in which one may engage, or through their capacity to empower them. People can either act in function of, or react to, the patterns and levels of recognition and redistribution already set in society. This chapter will investigate the agency through which individuals and groups may confront their unequal treatment in exchanges and therefore, modify favourably their sets of capabilities. It contemplates the complex nature of agency in exchanges, and addresses the following question:

To what extent can people’s (un)equal empowerment in capabilities be associated with people’s agency over exchanges?

The empirical research illustrates two different capabilities through which people or groups have influenced their level of empowerment in exchanges. On the one hand, individuals and collectives have gained greater opportunities through their ability to

accumulate resources and functionings. On the basis of such ability, people develop the opportunity to maintain their functions, or to choose to function differently through more selective and rewarding exchanges. On the other hand, individuals and collectives have raised their level of empowerment by negotiating the legitimate principle(s) that rule(s) their social misrecognition and the economic mal-reward in different exchanges and sub-fields, which lead to their relative disempowerment in exchange. They may also raise claims over their legal misprotection and political misrepresentation, which undermine levels of recognition, reward and empowerment through exchange. Such ability may develop through people's or groups' capacity to raise claims and/or pursue alternative exchanges and empowerment through new combinations/interpretations of forms of exchange. The chapter therefore argues that we need to account for those two individual's and groups' capabilities to make sense of their agency over exchange, and of their unequal power to negotiate the 'exchange - capability' relation. It represents a last essential element, which matters in a comprehensive outcome-focused assessment of justice, and of people's unequal (processes of) empowerment through exchanges.

This chapter is organised into two sections. Firstly, it evokes people's ability to accumulate resources and abilities in function of the patterns and levels of recognition and redistribution already set in society, to maintain or gain greater opportunities. Secondly, it illustrates the way in which people may react: their ability to make claims or to create alternatives to exchanges, and discusses the opportunities they may therefore enable.

7.1. The accumulation of resources

This section firstly argues, mainly drawing on the case of Umoja, that individuals and collectives gain greater opportunities through the accumulation of resources and functionings. The section discusses the nature of such capability as people's opportunity to

exert their agency over exchanges, and its importance for further structuring or challenging one's unequal empowerment.

7.1.1. A collective learning

As in the example of the Umoja saving activity, groups may have a significant role in capacitating, activating and stirring one's ability to accumulate and dispose of resources. Beyond the profit raised by the group through the interest asked for each loan, the groups stimulate individual savings that are disposed of collectively as well as individually.

Through the group, members learn how to save in spite of their restricted resources:

We gained financial education from this form [of exchange]. Our difficulty seemed to be the lack of money to spare. But, we learned that we do not need to have a large amount of money to save. For us, it was positive, because we learned (...) to save.

[Umo.6]

The discipline of the group offers financial education to the members (as a collective capability), which facilitates their individual capability for saving. People develop this capability through their involvement in such exchange. They describe such capability as the ability for discipline, in opposition to habits of 'un-reasoned' consumption:

We were automatically spending the money we had. We had no discipline to save any money. (...) We're relearning how to save; it is interesting for us. Who knows? (...)

I think twice before buying anything, because sometimes you buy a superfluous thing, and sometimes you reason. I used not to reason: I saw the bag here, (...) aesthetically beautiful, but it had no importance in my daily life... So, I think the group was important for this, you understand?

[Umo.6]

The group has helped members to realise the kind of project or activities that their 'money-wasting habits' had prevented them from undertaking, and made them feel constrained:

[Before,] we would run out of money to go to a cultural activity, the cinema, a show. We were reflecting on it together. We could not think of making a trip:

we never had the money for that, or we had spent all the money we received for the end-of-year celebrations. Then we had nothing left. So, if you wanted to go out, to some cultural event, you had no money for that. We thought a lot about this. We should be able to go out easily and without feeling constrained.

[Umo.6]

Such support for facilitating their capability for discipline and saving has motivated the creation¹⁵² and the activity of the group:

It is an individual necessity that we had for a more collective action. So, we have decided to try together, to embrace this idea of saving, to see if we can gather this money, and to see what this could bring us.

[Umo.6]

The experience of the group serves now to convince and make sense of the empowerment that people gain through the capability it facilitates:

If you join the group, you will see that with time we achieve [our goals], and you see it happening, you see that you can get there too. You can see that you can really count with that group. (...) It is something that really happens, it is something that works.

[Umo. 1]

Accumulation depends on exchanges to gather resources, but is pursued by groups and individuals, independently from how they access their capital.¹⁵³ Yet, accumulation should not only be understood as stimulated by mutual-assistance, such as in the example of Umoja. Hillenkamp et al. (2013: 7) illustrate how householding can also be interpreted as a collective form of saving and accumulation within groups:

¹⁵² Umoja leaders have initiated the creation of Umoja groups, yet the groups have demonstrated a different level of adhesion to the proposition. The group 1 (MdL) was the first, a pilot group to tempt the experience, while members of the group 2 (SeA) witnessing the adventure of other groups have initiated their own proper group.

¹⁵³ Compared to the other forms of capital reconversion described by Bourdieu, accumulation appears of a different nature. If conversion, transmission, or conditionality are inherently happening through the combination of forms of exchange and norms of entitlement, accumulation does not depend on them. Conversion, transmission or conditionality are by themselves pre-requirements and processes of acquisition of capitals.

In several contexts, e.g. rural Morocco studied by Morvant-Roux, Guérin and Roesch (2013) and South Kivu investigated by Le Polain and Nyssens (2013), owning livestock or plots of land is common practice. It represents a form of in-kind or 'reified' saving secured within the family.

7.1.2. Maintaining one's life-style

For the Umoja members, the benefits from being able to save and develop financial discipline are twofold: collective and individual. At an individual level, savings and financial discipline represent the opportunity to control economic shortages and the risks they represent for maintaining one's levels of functionings.

Members benefit from their savings through obtaining loans when necessary. Thus, 'empowerment' happens through the feeling of financial security:

If you have your savings, you know you can take [a loan], and that tomorrow or later something happens that you cannot carry on, you have that savings reserved there. (...) You get it on the same day.

[Umo. 1]

Savings firstly help people to sustain their involvement in the exchanges or activities they value (e.g. going to the cinema), and to maintain their life-style by reducing unanticipated financial difficulties:

Before, I would think twice between paying a bill or go to the movies. Not today. I can pay my bills, but I can also do other things.

[Umo.6]

People perceive the group's encouragement to save as a medium of addressing not only the need to control their opportunity-wasting consumption-habits, but also of anticipating their future needs:

We had no habit of saving. We took the money and wanted to spend it all right away, and it should not be so. You have to get some money and have control: you pay your debts, save a little for what you need, you have some of it saved aside a little... So that was a new understanding.

[Umo. 5]

Beyond this, members raise their awareness of the necessity to save, as a wish to master their future financial difficulties:

You will be always wanting to save with the group, because you know that the day you will need it, you will get [the money] back, you know?

[Umo. 1]

Polain and Nyssens (2013: 158) similarly confirm that savings disposed in householding exchanges not only enable people to '[satisfy] the family or clan's needs', to 'fulfil social obligations', but also protect their access to food from market fluctuations. Yet, the different forms of exchange on which accumulation is based or disposed of, may represent unequal protections and empowering outcomes. Hillenkamp et al. (2013: 6) effectively defended that:

A closer observation of the way popular actors secure their livelihoods shows multiple patterns of petty accumulation based on a diversity of resources and types of interdependencies within families, communities, and professional, religious and other types of groups. These interdependencies not only give structure to economic practices; they also create different forms of protection, depending on the types of relationships mobilized: protection based on solidarity and obligation among peers, according to the principles of reciprocity or householding; vertical or hierarchical protection in the case of redistribution or other forms of householding.

7.1.3. Widening access to exchanges

The accumulation of resources that savings and financial discipline allow, represents one's opportunity to widen his/her empowerment: progressively opening access to more selective exchanges, people may then access more valued function and life-style which are

likely to be more rewarding ¹⁵⁴. One member explains the importance of having such resources to anticipate and organise the realisation of what one values:

Someone [want to] buy such thing as paint, colours. At the end of the year, one claims:

- 'This month, I would like to buy paint to paint my house.'

We'll organise the loans accordingly.

[Umo. 5]

Therefore, accumulation represents the capitalization not only of resources but also of options for future functionings, guaranteeing both the ability to choose and to act. The level of resources people and groups are able to accumulate help them to measure their perspective on their ability to act:

When you have and save some money, you get to create a perspective on what you can do with that money, project something further ahead.

[Umo.6]

The accumulation and control over resources is of great importance for shaping people's capabilities: they enable people not only to plan their actions and to control their realisation, but also to envision future functionings. The mutualisation of the savings along with the collection of interests for the loans, multiplies the potential of the members' individual opportunities to seek such further empowerment.

The ability to accumulate resources represents for people the relative opportunity to exert a greater agency over exchanges, to master better their access and involvement in exchanges. If it appears more noticeable through one's ability to accumulate the highly regarded element that money is, I do not pretend that only the accumulation of economic

¹⁵⁴ As in the following example, getting paint to refurbish one's house, is not likely to be particularly 'rewarding', at least not economically, but certainly correspond to the life-style that the person in question values.

resources mediates such agency. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) demonstrated, the accumulation of other forms of capital, such as cultural and social capitals, play a large role in strategies of capital reconversion and the access to different fields. The capability for economic savings echoes the accumulation of complementary resources, such as cultural resources, for example one's knowledge, mastering of cultural codes, or the ability to find, analyse or search for information, or social resources such as one's social relations and ability to network. All those elements may be equally important and necessary to facilitate and multiply people's opportunities to get involved in valued exchanges, and to access and maintain valued functionings. Yet, as argued before by Bourdieu, resources do not hold the same social value and power to empower in exchanges. Accumulation of different kind of resources may affect unequally one's agency over exchanges.

7.1.4. Freedom, pleasure and capability to aspire

The accumulation of money in the two Umoja groups, but particularly in Group 2 (SeA), illustrates well how members widen the perception of their choices and capabilities, but also how they regain the freedom and pleasure to use money. One member explains:

For us, it was interesting. (...) One other thing we're relearning is (...) to take pleasure (...), to do what you want too. (...) Women must have access to the money not only to buy food, but also to dream, to spend on leisure... The practice has opened the eyes of some women for that. (...)

I think [it is good to be able to] spend on whatever you want without even needing it – to buy a book, to go to the theatre, to sit at the table of a bar – those things you thought: 'ah, I will not spend on this because I have a bill to pay'. This money also gives you the ability to decide not to do anything with the money, on the contrary to feeling obliged. That money there is something free [for you to use as you like]: 'I'm saving to go to the theatre, to go to the cinema'.

I can (...) even spend with pleasure. (...) It gives you this possibility (...) of your particular [choice]. (...) [it is not only] consumption.

[Umo.6]

Consumption enabled through savings and financial discipline gains another meaning for the Umoja members, freed from the notion of obligation, and more inclined towards the self, pleasure and choice. The meaning of one's accumulated resources also evolves with the perception of its potential use, and along with the capabilities and the ambition to achieve functionings that the accumulation of resources stimulates. Accumulation has the potential for people not only to turn consumption into a source of pleasure, but also into a choice and an opportunity to realise what they value. The accumulation of economic capital changed the members' perception of their choices and opportunities. It represents a powerful element to account for and to confront one's adaptive preference, but also the structures beyond people's capability to aspire.

7.1.5. Enhancing an egalitarian collective enterprise (or not)

The act of accumulating capitals collectively is also instrumental for the group, giving members the resources to care collectively for others by pursuing mutual-assistance. Through the organisation of the collective saving and the accumulated economic capital, members enhance their ability to care for and to receive help from the others. It constitutes a collective capability, the capability to guarantee members not to have a shortfall of resources. The accumulated resources of the group equally modify the position of the group in terms of its social and economic endowment, giving it the possibility of being involved in further empowering exchanges. The members of the Group 2 (SeA) for

example, voiced the wish to adopt a small collective profit-seeking strategy by placing their money in the stock exchange.¹⁵⁵

Accumulation may stimulate collective endeavours, and eventually an egalitarian empowerment of members, through reinforcing mutual-assistance exchanges, such as in Umoja. Yet, it may influence individualistic strategies if invested in profit-seeking exchanges. The accumulation of resources therefore echoes the unsolved distributive matters discussed earlier as a structural ambiguity of the form of exchange. In profit-seeking exchanges, the accumulation of economic capitals may effectively offer people the possibility to guarantee the sustainability of their profit-seeking practice aside from cooperative concerns, and therefore to be freed from social norms that may constrain their use of the form and relative rewards.¹⁵⁶ In the São Joaquim market for example, the accumulation of economic capital represents the possibility for the most 'powerful' merchant to rely on the advantage of an economy of scale, and to bypass the equal-opportunity to create profit, which the equal-price norm negotiated by other stall-keepers thought to guarantee. A merchant denounces the disrespect for such rules, and how it creates an unequal opportunity to seek profit:

Some [traders] have distinguished themselves and today they possess big businesses. On the other side of the market, there is the supermarket called 'Recôncavo'. There is also the 'Centro-Sul'. They were born here. (...) They interfere [with smaller traders] in this way: they have a higher [acquisitive] power, they create a certain monopoly. (...) It creates inequalities. (...)

In times of negotiating and buying, they will have a higher discount than us who buy 10, 15 bags. Suppose, if a truck arrives, those persons with better conditions may buy the whole truck's merchandise. They will resell it to us for

¹⁵⁵ By contrast, some members of the group 1 (MdL) aim to multiply the empowerment they gain through such exchange, by creating other self-help groups through which they could also save and multiply access to loans.

¹⁵⁶ The accumulation of one's social, symbolic or cultural capitals, is also often the objective of the commercial, or research and development programs of powerful profit-making enterprises.

more. (...) Since they have greater purchasing power, when buying, they will have more opportunities. (...)

[Benefiting from lower prices,] they can [also] steal our customers, because they pass products to us at the same price as to consumers. (...) We still can make a profit, [but] he will earn more. (...) Thus, the smaller [traders] will be subservient, but that is something particular to trade. (...)

However, sometimes he will facilitate our sales because we can pay within 30 days. Yet, we still have this difficulty.

[S.J.3.Emp]

The high level of economic capital accumulated by the wealthy merchants, guarantees their economic advantage. Their profit-seeking exchanges rely less on the social contract set with his peers, than on their more advantageous economic status through which they can individually negotiate the price when buying products. Their economic advantage supports their economic stability and sustains their set of opportunities through exchange, away from social constraints.

Accumulation of capital conditions one's power of non-subjection to the (social) rules that apply to others profit-seekers. One's obligation to maintain and comply with non-profit exchanges effectively fades away, in practice, with one's accumulation of economic capital, and this acts as a powerful distinctive advantage. Therefore, people's experience and empowerment through profit-seeking depends greatly on their position in the social and economic order, and the power it gives them to barter (beyond the laws of the supply and demand). Merchants' unequal acquisitive power and the distinctive status they can gain in the negotiation of prices may reintroduce concurrence and unequal opportunities in profit-seeking. Accumulation may therefore feed exponential empowerment opportunities and create equivocal results in terms of people's unequal capabilities. The example of the wealthy traders of the São Joaquim market, also echoes the power of the Uruguai fishermen's or Camapet's intermediaries to set the former economic status, and to constrain their opportunities in profit-seeking exchanges.

Economic status in profit-seeking exchanges therefore not only echoes social structures, but also limits one's position, opportunities, and possibility of bartering within markets.

The agency one may gain through his/her ability to accumulate resources, relies and may stimulate highly unequal dynamics of empowerment for different reasons. Firstly, one's opportunity to accumulate resources depends on one's involvement in previous exchanges, which are based on one's social status and on exchanges' unequal empowering strength in unequally valued (economic, social and cultural) capitals. Secondly, the different sociocultural values attached to one's resources (whether economic, cultural, or social capitals and functions) in different fields modulate the empowerment one may gain through accumulation. Effectively as Bourdieu argued, one's knowledge and know-how (cultural and social capital) are not as easily transferred across fields as economic resources, and do not have the same impact on their empowerment through exchanges. Finally, the kind of individual or collective enterprise, which the accumulated resources may stimulate, explains why strategies of accumulation are likely to sharpen and exacerbate the unequal social distribution of opportunities, which we saw impact people's capability to aspire.

This section has therefore argued that people's ability to accumulate resources mediates their agency and control over their access to further empowering exchanges. An individual's agency appears as one's relative command and mobilisation of resources according to the prospective offered by exchanges. The next section argues by contrast, that agency may pass through people's and groups' struggles in order to negotiate the structural and cultural, or objective and symbolic characteristics of their empowerment through exchanges.

7.2. Struggles and exchanges

This section describes how groups struggle against the levels of disregard of their identity, roles and life-styles, to which they are subject in different fields, and which lead to their mal-reward through exchanges. Those struggles may be twofold. On the one hand, people may raise specific claims to credit the actors of such fields, denouncing their social misrecognition and economic mal-reward. They also may seek to have such betterment formally guaranteed through their legal protection or through political representation¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ The terminology used in this section illustrates my indebtedness to the work of Nancy Fraser. I have effectively found in Fraser's work a more eloquent terminology than in Bourdieu's unique notion of struggle for symbolic recognition in order to describe 'the cultural and economic dimensions of emancipatory struggles' (2004: 375) observed in empirical data. Her concepts help to describe the diverse claims that people are able to articulate in their struggles, and which matter for accounting for people's agency over their (un)just treatment in exchanges. However, I need to introduce two main elements of divergence with her approach.

Firstly, I am still following a Bourdieusian tradition in this thesis for several reasons. Fraser (2004: 381) focuses on the political approaches and moral dimension of theories of justices, when she analyses 'the shape of contemporary struggles, the grammar of political claims-making, and the extant folk paradigms of social justice'. To the contrary, I investigate movements of recognition such as those happening in the site of the Old-Alagados, and their interplay with people's empowerment through exchanges. Fraser effectively focuses on how to remedy social injustice with an ethical account, while I aim to observe the dynamics that shape them. Consequently, she conceives politics of recognition, distribution (and representation) as a diverging moral appreciation of justice, while from a Bourdieusian point of view, such movements are ongoing struggles of negotiation of one's place in and function of the social structure. This work acknowledges struggles not only as inscribed in the political field (similarly to Fraser), but as an account of people's (in)action in the wider social sphere and economic field (such as Bourdieu studied them).

As Wacquant (2004: 11) highlighted, such an approach represents a different hermeneutical perspective:

This means that, far from being a novel development linked to the rise of 'cultural diversity' in advanced societies, the politics of recognition have always been with us: they are intrinsic to the human condition. Issues of redistribution are inseparable from questions of dignitas insofar as social existence arises in and through distinction, which necessarily assigns to each a differential social status and worth. And because the symbolic war of all against all never ends, there can be no political claim, no matter how coarsely material, that does not enclose a demand for social acknowledgment.

Secondly and regarding the concepts, Fraser (2004: 380) considers social recognition, economic redistribution and political representation (that she lately incorporated to her framework), as 'a third, political dimension of social justice, alongside the (economic) dimension of redistribution and the (cultural) dimension of recognition'. The empirical data converge with her claim that not only social recognition, economic distribution, but also political representation are complementary guarantees of people's fair treatment. However, alongside her tri-dimensional model, I consider legal protection as a fourth and equally important dimension of justice.

On the other hand, people may avoid raising claims in some fields, but may pursue empowering exchanges that represent alternatives to their exclusion from dominant exchanges (e.g. community-based saving methods vis-à-vis a liberal banking system). Through claims or alternative exchanges, group members negotiate their position in the social order and therefore the range and level of their possibility to function, enabled and facilitated through exchanges. Groups' ability to struggle against the misrecognition and mal-reward of their members, matters in accounting for the effective unequal empowerment of the population.

Moreover, the section illustrates that such struggles are inscribed in the wider social sphere, or in two dominant fields,¹⁵⁸ the political and the market, which constrain their appearance and role in function of the doxas that they endorse. If struggles such as groups' abilities to raise claims and create alternative exchanges matter in accounting for the constant negotiation of people's unequal treatment and empowerment through exchanges, they yet question the role of one's agency toward one's level of empowerment.

7.2.1. In the political field

In the political field¹⁵⁹, people's claims for their political representation and legal protection are particularly at stake. By political representation, I refer to the 'governance

¹⁵⁸ By 'fields', I refer to Bourdieu's notion of social spaces in which rules of organisation, norms and principles of hierarchy are proper and set through what he called the 'doxa of the field'.

¹⁵⁹ By political field, I refer to Bourdieu's (1991b: 235; in Wacquant, 2004: 6, 8) understanding of the privileged sites for the exercise of the power of representation or manifestation [in the sense of public demonstration – tr.] that contributes to making what existed in a practical state, tacitly or implicitly, exist fully, that is, in the objectified state, in a form directly visible to all, public, published, official, and thus authorized. (...)

structures and decision-making procedures' (Fraser et al., 2004: 380) to which people and groups may have access. States of political misrepresentation may vary for example, from non-representation (i.e. being rendered invisible regarding the system of representation in place), to their marginalisation (i.e. being voluntarily set aside from mainstream system of legitimate action and decision). They represent the political dimension of social injustices. By legal protection, I refer to the legal status (legislative and judiciary) that defines people and groups' right and duties, and institutionalises their role and function in society. States of legal mis-protection may vary for example, from non-protection (being rendered invisible regarding the law, legal status or respective judiciary system of protection), mal-protection (being subject of unrestrained verbal defamation or physical harassment without the possibility to be protected or engage pursuit), to illegality (being denied full rights and protection as citizens or regarding one's activity). They represent the legal dimension of social justice.

As the examples of Camapet and Umoja demonstrate, groups negotiate the legality of their practice (i.e. the nature and object of their exchanges), and their insertion into positive development policies of protection and in partnerships with the government. Legal and political measures may confer access to public funds, guaranteeing the social consideration of their identity, but also the apportionment of functionings and resources in direct exchanges with appointed governments. Moreover, and due to the particular regulatory nature of the state, those measures are likely to modify the game of other fields: they set the unequal empowerment of their exchanges, and acts as a legal guarantee of their

[It is also the space] within which (...) the 'bureaucratic field' [was gradually created] i.e., the set of impersonal public institutions officially devoted to serving the citizenry and laying claim to authoritative nomination and classification – as with the granting of credentials (for positive sociodicy) and the bestowing of penal marks (for negative sociodicy).

sociocultural recognition and economic distribution. By social recognition, I refer to the social acceptance of the validity and conformity of one's identity, life-style or activities in view of dominant social norms. States of social misrecognition may vary for example, from symbolic domination¹⁶⁰ (being subjected to socially authoritative schemes of interpretation and action that are different from one's ideals or feelings of justice), non-recognition (being rendered invisible with regard to the valued schemes of interpretation of the world), to disrespect (having one's identity or cultural production routinely maligned, or disparaged, or stereotyped in social interaction or in the media) (see Fraser, 1998 : 432). By economic redistribution, I refer not only to monetary or material rewards, but also to the apportionment of functionings and resources [i.e. all forms of capital detailed by Bourdieu] to which one may legitimately be entitled. Similarly to the way in which the term economic has been used to talk about the different forms of exchange rather than profit-seeking, the term is used again here to designate the wide distributions of resources, functions and roles of people in society, rather than only monetary resources. States of economic mis-reward may vary for example, from exploitation (having the fruits of one's activity (or partial participation) appropriated for the benefit of others), deprivation (being denied access to opportunity to function and rewards through exchanges), to restriction (being confined to a work or position in which one's functionings is restrained and limited as well as poorly rewarded) (see Fraser, 1998: 432).

Camapet claims to be a legitimate partner of the municipal government and pursues a political struggle for its political representation, legal status and economic redistribution as an actor in the local treatment of waste. The cooperative denounces the actual trash management, a duty of the municipality of Salvador. The cooperative reproaches the

¹⁶⁰ I refer here to Bourdieu's concept.

municipality for not maintaining environmentally friendly services, and for being guided instead by some private interests¹⁶¹. The environmental approach is a principle around which they organise their struggle for legitimacy. It is, in their claim, a new 'legitimate principle of legitimation', against the 'legitimate mode of reproduction of the foundations of domination' (Bourdieu, 1996: 376 in Wacquant, 2004: 8), that operate through actual schemes of recognition and redistribution in exchanges endorsed by the municipal government. The cooperative therefore establishes claims through advocating the value of their environmentally friendly management of waste.¹⁶²

The complex of scavenger cooperatives has been created to gain such political voice:

because we aimed to strengthen (...) the part of political actions in order to seek some results. Therefore, this question of the quest for a collective force was very important.

[Cam.6.Adm]

They claim that their organisations should be integrated into the municipal waste collection and management plan, because they actually play an indispensable role in the city's effort to comply with its environmental duty:

The municipality has the responsibility to recognise the recycling collection. So now, the challenge is this: (...) what we actually seek from the municipality is to recognize the scavengers as effectuating a service of fundamental importance in the cleaning service of the town.

[Cam.6.Adm]

¹⁶¹ The municipality has outsourced the collection and treatment of the waste to the public enterprise called LIMPURB. Waste is disposed only in landfill or in a biogas power generating station. Translating the general discontent, Silva et al. (2012) criticize the activity of the firm about two points: for not being environmentally friendly, and for its geographically and temporarily sporadic waste collect.

¹⁶² Therefore, I call struggles the movements that seek to modify the legitimating principle of domination in fields (according to a Bourdieusian approach). Meanwhile, I refer to claims as the denunciations of certain perceived injustices, or the promotion of a justice, which I will illustrate as of legal status, political representation, social recognition or economic distribution, and which principles of legitimation may create or overlook.

They equally claim for their right to be remunerated accordingly for such a contribution:

For the environment, you see the degradation that it represents, (...) all these environmental issues... So [we want] the prefecture to recognize scavengers as an important element in the hygiene of the city and [we want the prefecture to] pay them.

[Cam.6.Adm]

The official recognition of Camapet (and peer cooperatives) by the municipality as contributors to its trash management, would be fundamental to guarantee not only the greater legitimacy of the actor(s) and of their activity, but also their perennial and economic sustainability.

In spite of their successful integration into the municipal official waste-management, the complex of cooperatives has progressively gained the support of the state as an ally in this political struggle. A representative illustrates the support of the state government toward the project to formalise recycling cooperatives as actors of the municipal system of waste management. The state interprets the scavengers' political and economic claims as legitimate according to the legislation:

[Salvador's] municipality hires a private company that cleans the city and another company uses and benefits from this waste. (...) [However,] there is a law in Brazil that considers environmental services as a social service, a service rendered to society... When people help to remove garbage, the state should pay them for this service. The same law states that companies that generate waste – for example, the company that creates electronic waste, cans, plastic, etc. – has a duty to pay those who remove this garbage from the streets. [They have to] pay for this environmental service. (...)

[The state supports] the application of the municipal law [to cooperatives]. (...) The municipality should pay for the environmental service they are doing. (...) [In this case,] the state government [would] finance the industrialization of this waste. [The scavengers] will collect, transform this waste into bottles, sell to the market and will still receive payment for the environmental service they performed by the [municipal] prefecture.¹⁶³

[Gov. 1]

The state government not only supports the legal status of scavenger cooperatives, but also endows the complex with public resources. Firstly, the government has supplied key material resources to the union of cooperatives:

Today the state government is giving us some support: we rent the space in which we are working from the state. (...) This partnership [between the state and the cooperative complex] is of fundamental importance. (...) We acquired equipment of very high value, [and thanks to this provision] for example, today we are about to open a papermaking business. (...) They give us the equipment that will strengthen our joint marketization and add value to our products. (...) As we commonly say, the state government today gives the stick for us to fish.

[Cam.6.Adm]

Secondly, the government has become an important partner for the collection of materials.

For example:

The program 'Bahia already recycle' (Recicle já Bahia) organise the collection of material in partnership with the state government. Not only Camapet, but also all the local cooperatives participate in this program [which facilitates] the collection in public organisations. [With] the vehicle of the government itself, (...) it organises the collection (...) every day of the week by a cooperative. (...) This is a great partnership, very strong.

[Cam.6.Adm]

¹⁶³ The 'feasibility' of the project is however questioned by the interest of politicians:

Probably we [the government of Bahia in alliance with recycling cooperatives] will have difficulties in changing the actual logic [of the waste management supported by the municipality, because of other relations of dependency between actors]. They hire a big company. Usually companies help to finance political campaigns and it is improbable that they will stop being partners. There is already a structure of trash collection established in the city. So what can we hope? (...) To break the contracts they already have today would be unfeasible. It would be foolhardy for the sanitation of the city. We cannot do that, but we can [slowly] promote the selective collection.

[Gov. 1]

Thirdly, it has initiated the coordination with the municipal government, of a temporary partnership for waste management during carnivals:

For the carnival, (...) the state government pays scavenger cooperatives, while the municipality lends the trucks to help with the collection.

[Cam.6.Adm]

As a final outcome of these joint claims for their legitimisation and economic rewards, Camapet and its peers have recently gained a representative space through accompanying the debate on the 'basic plan of urban sanitation'¹⁶⁴ of Salvador.

As another example, the political struggle of Umoja partners¹⁶⁵ is more recent, but has started showing positive results. Umoja associative leaders claim to offer a more legitimate 'methodology'¹⁶⁶, as an alternative to the organisation and legitimacy of the liberal banking system. According to them, this addresses the need for a banking solution for those who experience:

an issue with the access to credit. Usually, the population involved in rotating funds do not have access to credit through the formal banking system. Yet, this self-authorized financing scheme offers [financial] viability for people (...). So, it is a door that opens to these groups, as they historically have no access to credit.

[Part. 4]

The leaders also affirm the practice of offering self-help, based on solidarity, participation and cooperation, which is legitimate in opposition to a top-down and capitalist approach of development:

To be communitarian, to be developed collectively, already constitutes a very big difference, superior to capitalist alternatives based on competition,

¹⁶⁴ Plano Básico de Limpeza de Salvador (PBLU-Salvador)

¹⁶⁵ The Umoja project is held by local partners (associations Santa Luzia and Casa de Taipa) in order to implement and support Umoja groups. It should not to be confused with the groups taken as case studies.

¹⁶⁶ Term used by the leaders of the associations regarding the particular organisation of Umoja groups.

individualism and not on solidarity. (...) Rotating solidarity funds (...) are an alternative model of development to the conventional way (...) which has not offered people respect. It has established increasingly dehumanizing hierarchies. Then, solidarity revolving funds, through practices based on self-management, participation and cooperation, are an alternative to this model of development. It develops practices (...) in which the respect (...) of the group is strategic.

[Part. 4]

The State of Bahia, which also endorses a bottom-up approach to development and values grounded experiences, has offered, through the secretariat for solidarity economy (SESOL), to financially support some solidarity economy projects¹⁶⁷, initiating a new policy of cooperation. The director comments:

Late 2010, [the state] has launched a program to subsidise rotating funds with more than R\$ 3 million. (...) From then, we started to cooperate with these social actors and to strengthen a partnership.

[Gov.1]

Later, the municipality of Salvador and the State instigated, in collaboration, a network of structural empowerment for some 20 local initiatives of the solidarity economy. Through this operation, UMOJA won R\$100 thousand to cover the functioning and training fees of the Umoja project.

Not only the claims, but also the legitimization and formalisation of the third-sector, have been observed as a tendency, alongside the effects of the latter over the empowerment of their members:

¹⁶⁷ The SETRE's public notice is available at: www2.setre.ba.gov.br/editalsesol2011/

As a general trend, community-based savings methods, including ROSCAs and SACCOs, have been proliferating in recent decades. Such expansion has been facilitated by government development policies that perceive SACCOs as a path toward individual (particularly women's) empowerment (Ossome, 2013; Nannyonjo, forthcoming). Community-based savings methods are attracting increasing attention from governments, NGOs, banks and economists (Ardener, 2010).

(Utting et al., 2014: 19)

Additionally, the status of actors in the labour market illustrates the influence that occupational regulations may have over people and groups' opportunities. They reflect governments' influence, as legitimate actors arbitrating 'administrative' matters, over schemes of social recognition and reward of actors in society. The status of Camapet members as 'autonomous workers' organised in cooperatives, might seem at first to advantage the cooperative economically, since they are exempt from paying social contribution toward their employees. Yet, it prevents the group from attracting co-workers and maintaining its practice over time. Compared to a formal contract, working in a cooperative represents for members a less desirable social status (and set of opportunities). Working in a cooperative effectively holds neither the same social prestige, nor rights, as for formal employees:

I won't lie to you. My dream is to have a formal contract signed. Before I joined the cooperative, I had this dream of getting a formal job. (...) But if I don't, I'm very happy here. Now, if one day it happens, you know, if God gives me the opportunity to sign a formal contract, with everything right, if I arrange that job and know that I could prosper, then yes.

[Cam8.BW]

The low legitimacy of their activity contributes to a high turnover of the staff, under social pressure to get a 'real job':

Actually in Camapet already more than 500 people have been working. Today we have a more balanced group, but we had a great problem of turnover. Your head is trapped with this crazy thought:

- 'Is staying here [working in Camapet] the right thing to do?'

Because this question of signing a formal contract, this more traditional option offered in the labour market, is something that parents at home constantly call for. My father says:

- 'Get out [of that job], you're draining yourself away, etc. Look for a formal job.'

[Cam.6.Adm]

The labour status set by the government implies a legal mal-protection of their occupational social rights.¹⁶⁸ It can prejudice not only the possibility for Camapet to sustain its activity, and ability to be rewarded, which in turn influences the social misrecognition of cooperatives' occupational status. Despite the fact that they identified the effect of such legislation over their unequal opportunity to function and be socially recognised, Camapet has not yet engaged either in a struggle over the legitimating principles of such 'occupational' division, or into claims over its better legal protection.

Claims in the political field appear to be the most prominent elements of groups' effective struggle, because legal protection and political representation act as a formal guarantee regarding the treatment and empowerment one will receive in exchanges with the state (e.g. redistributive social policies, taxes, state monopolies of services such as the waste collection), but also beyond the state (e.g. in the labour market or third-sector). Governments are therefore important actors defining the social recognition and consequent economic rewards of different groups and within different fields, eventually defining their unequal opportunities and entitlements to exchange. This finding converges with both

¹⁶⁸ In comparison to the mainstream form of employment, cooperatives effectively need to develop by themselves the ability to contribute or to set insurance schemes that would protect them from occupational hazards such as sickness, pregnancy, and age.

Bourdieu and Fraser's understanding of the state as a dominant actor of recognition. Since '[t]he state [legitimately] produces the official classifications, [it] is in a sense the supreme tribunal' (Bourdieu, 1985: 206) of the interpretation of the social sphere.

In fact, the welfare state is a central nexus of interpenetration of economy and culture. Welfare states distribute material benefits, (...) institutionalize cultural norms of entitlement and desert; they construct various distinct (and often unequally valued) subject positions or identities for their claimants and beneficiaries. The welfare state is the point of imbrication of economy and culture, redistribution and recognition.

(Fraser, 1996: 55)

Most administrative regulations are likely to represent and guarantee particular spaces and levels of economic rewards, not only in the political field and in relation to the power and legitimacy to define legitimating principles of society, but in a wider social field. Those shape people's and groups' different and complex sets of opportunities to function. Therefore, in the political field, claims not only for political representation and for legal protection may matter for people and groups in order to negotiate their spaces of disempowerment.

Yet, the case of Camapet, among the complex of scavenger cooperatives, has illustrated earlier, that legislation, such as the one that obliges municipalities to remunerate actors of the waste-management, can be ineffective since governments may overlook the recognition of one's legal status and entitlement. Moreover, if political struggles and claims are central for one's empowerment, it demands that actors not only identify the different elements in which governments hold (intentionally or not) a power over their relative disempowerment, circumscribing one's opportunities, but also engage an active fight to change the legal understanding of how exchanges need to operate.

7.2.2. In the wider social sphere

Actors struggle for a better social recognition in the wider social sphere¹⁶⁹, in order for their activity, life-style and practices to be validated and rewarded. To do so, they challenge categories of judgement endorsed at a wide social scale by the general public. Actors regard those judgements as a misinterpretation of their social, economic, political or legal value, similarly to struggles in the political field. This way, they may consolidate their previous political struggles and legitimate their involvement in empowering exchanges.

As a cause and a consequence of the low social value of cooperatives compared to enterprises of the labour market, Camapet confronts the dominant principle of legitimate contractual working relations in labour markets. The pursuit of such struggle primarily requires the initiation of workers into a new doxa of labour and convincing them of the distinctive social value of their engagement with the cooperative during their induction:

Through the training, (...) to create an enterprise in which we are partners, with no boss; [an enterprise that] flees this traditionally capitalist system and that advances toward the solidarity of being partners; [an enterprise in which] there is no owner, but shareholders, [in which] each could have his opinion and be given a voice was very prominent.

[Cam.6.Adm]

Solidarity as a new doxa of exchange organising the distribution of labour in Camapet, is adopted after a period of transition. During this period, new members question

¹⁶⁹ The wider social sphere refers to the sphere in which society negotiates the weight and extent of each field, through the different importance and legitimacy they give to their doxa. Struggles in the wider social sphere have principles of legitimacy of division of the world at stake. They structure the '[k]nowledge of the social world and, more precisely, the categories which make it possible, (...) [and represents] inextricably theoretical and practical struggle for the power to conserve or transform the social world by conserving or transforming the categories through which it is perceived' (Bourdieu, 1991a: 236). Such judgement, I argued, is highly arbitrated by the state, but goes beyond its reach. Claims in the wider social sphere are therefore articulated toward the general public.

the dominant model of labour, and realise that it is an arbitrary cultural and distributive choice that could be different. A member explains:

Anyone who enters Camapet breaks a paradigm. People believed that any form of work needed to be arranged through a formal contract of employment [carteira assinada]. So, this is the first shock. The cooperative does not sign your contract. You are a member and thus contribute to a process, and its result will be divided between the parties who contributed to it. So, this first taboo is broken.

[Cam.1.Adm]

Camapet's social struggle first deconstructs the mainstream organisation of labour using a utility-satisfaction form. The mainstream organisation of labour is a 'paradigm' taken for granted in society. The strength of this paradigm in shaping representation of appropriate labour relations and exchanges is such, that it seems unthinkable to question it. This corresponds to a 'taboo'. Once this taboo is broken, cooperative members can endorse the alternative model. It becomes their proper choice:

I joined Camapet due to a lack of opportunity, now what keeps me in Camapet today is choice.

[Cam.6.Adm]

Members' new experiences lead them to disregard as unfair many aspects of the dominant liberal model: the discriminative recruitment, the hierarchical organisation, and the redistribution of role, choices, decisions and benefices. One member for example comments:

Primarily because we are from a deprived community, at that time when I was younger, I knocked at many doors, I wasn't fully qualified, so doors closed on me. (...) The system out there is a system that degrades a lot, you knock here and there, but you do not see a lot of opportunity. (...) It was an opportunity (...) through the cooperative, to be included and to raise my proper income.

[Cam.6.Adm]

Members are able to put emphasis on the comparative advantage that cooperatives represent in term of decision-making through the adoption of an equal-opportunity form:

Here in the cooperative, we have the right to speak, we will listen to the views of each, (...) then we have to reach a consensus. Being in a place that we can be heard is great, being in a place where we can participate in all positions is even better.

[Cam.4.PU]

The model of solidarity economy adopted, therefore, is claimed to address spaces of misrecognition and mal-reward.¹⁷⁰

Moreover, Camapet directly engages in a dialogue with the general public about the importance of its role and creates with the public a social and economic alliance. The group needs first to challenge people's mentalities and addresses their disregard toward the cooperative's activity, as a transcription of the perception of its incongruity and low symbolic value. A member of the waste selection unit explains that members constantly have to face criticisms and need to fight prejudices daily, revalorizing their involvement with trash scavenging and recycling activity through a positive vocabulary:

[The work] is easy; you only have to have a minimum of... [*silence*] patience... [*silence*] courage to face all... [*silence*] because (...) we work with recycled material.

When we are in the street, people say it's rubbish. We are always the target of talks. [But we answer:] 'It is not rubbish; it is recycling material.' It's a little bit complex you see.

[Cam.7.BW]

Beyond challenging such low symbolic value, the cooperative pursues a strategy to rehabilitate their essential function in society by asking 'what if we were not there?'. Camapet seeks, through the educative interventions of a specialised team, not only to sensitize the public to the distinctive value of their social-economy and environment-

¹⁷⁰ Fraser (2011) considers the ability of groups to renegotiate norms and particularly neoliberal rules of the economic field as a third pillar of Polanyi's double movement insuring social protection. Yet, she ignores the conflictual doxas and expectation to which actors are ordinarily conforming themselves to pursue their struggles. This is particularly illustrated by Camapet that, despite negotiating the rules of the labour market for example, is however involved in the commodification of recyclable wastes.

friendly activities. They also seek to initiate the contribution of the general public to their mission, as a coalition with the 'sources' to whom they 'offer a service':

In truth, we do a work of environmental education through the city and through this work, we also organize the waste collection. Therefore, we do not buy waste; the community provides this residue to the cooperative.

We offer a service. We have a group of environmental educators ready to give presentations and training to housing condominiums, companies, or public organisations. Through this, and in exchange we do collect such waste. It is an exchange of service, both environmental education and the service of collection, and we dispose of the waste.

[Cam.6.Adm]

It represents an important step to initiate a partnership with the public, which supports their activity through instituting a relation of reciprocal duty and responsibility of one toward the other. One member explains that such a relation has naturally expanded:

People believed in us, so [the relationship with the cooperative] evolved. (...) Now, (...) it coincides with a certain responsibility. Before, we started [collecting] door to door (...). Today we no longer make this work, because we do not go toward them, people come to us. (...) [For example,] we schedule [a talk] at a school, (...), and one college passes our references to another. (...) And you know we do not buy the material, right? (...) It's donated, [people and institutions became] partners. (...) Sometimes they call: 'Do not come and pick up [the material] on such day. I'm driving by your place and I will leave it.'

[Cam.5.PU]

Camapet gains a form of 'sympathy' and 'loyalty' toward its role, which acknowledges and informally guarantees the cooperative's particular status and function. Such social recognition has entitled cooperatives to gain access legitimately and more widely to recyclable waste, which the public and institutions now provide. Because of their increasing social recognition, the public accepts becoming what we can call an economic partner. The public reckons the particular social status of Camapet and agrees to contribute to it. This raises Camapet's level of economic distribution and helps to maintain and eventually expand their activity.

The case of Umoja nonetheless illustrates that fighting a social struggle may appear incompatible with the social emancipation that members may try to gain. Umoja members may incur a penalty if they do not act in conformity with their social status (i.e. their position-role) of housewives and mothers. Being mothers and housewives comes with an understanding of the relation/exchanges they are expected to nurture with their relatives: a devoted, self-forgetting and unconditional participation in the care and provision of the household. It constrains the nature of their (dis)empowerment. Moreover, it prevents them from raising an open criticism about those pre-established opportunities to be and do, or to openly pursue and to seek the social recognition of their unrighteous practices. Hence, the alternative exchanges and forms of empowerment they pursue is secret. Therefore, in contrast with Camapet, Umoja leaders have been engaged in a political struggle independently from members' engagement with a social struggle.

Umoja members mainly express the wish to free themselves, mediating alternative opportunities to those constrained by their familial and financial environment, rather than openly claiming for the unfair social misrecognition and economic misdistribution relative to their situation. On the one hand, members associate the freedom they gain through Umoja groups with the opportunities that they could gain if they could open their own proper bank account:

[It is as] if you had a bank account... Umoja groups give you this possibility at a small level.

[Umo.6]

On the other hand, the women participating in Umoja groups identify their duty within the family – and sometimes the mediation of money by their husbands – as a restriction of their freedom to act. They describe their involvement in Umoja as an advantage and as an emancipation with regard to their family (who may expect the women to act more responsibly and dispose of their resources for household caring necessities):

[As] women (...) during our life, we did not learn to have the same relationship with money that men have. [The Umoja experience] shows us that women must have access to the money, to not only buy food, but also to dream, spend on leisure. The group has attracted some women because of that.

This [Umoja group] gives the possibility to use the money freely. You too have a choice, as a woman, as an individual person. And sometimes, this family thing, the context in which you live, it sometimes (...) cuts your dream (...). Even more, when families are very large, you lose your individuality. You have the possibility to have this money aside, saving what's yours and no one needs to know.

[Umo.6]

Women create a space to resolve the issue of their economic alienation from the family but also of their social role as women. Through the group, the women can regain the freedom to choose and act for themselves. The emancipation that women gain in respect of the patriarchal familial organisations and the relative social order that they suffer in their social environment, effectively incites them to pursue their activity in some secrecy.¹⁷¹ The group members remain anonymous while seeking their emancipation from their families or coping with their exclusion from finance institutions. Secrecy is important, showing that in their struggle, they do not directly fight the symbol of entitlement to money and of role in the family and society:

This money is yours, not everyone knows you have access to it, except that group you're sharing with. (...) Even some family members do not know, because it is a very individual thing. So, it gives you the possibility not to tell, not to say you are saving, but [only] that you're in a self-help group. You do not necessarily have to say that you are raising money. You can tell people, or not. There is no obligation. (...) [The Umoja group] gives you this possibility, the secret of what is particular, private to you (...) this money here is something free.

[Umo.6]

¹⁷¹ This is not uniformly the case of all the members, a few of whom, single, widows, separated or even still in a couple, have agreed to participate to a video organised by Caritas-Salvador, which promotes the organisation and the advantages of participating in the Umoja groups.

The emancipation from disempowering patriarchal and financial norms that Umoja offers, passes through the creation of an alternative order, an alternative set of rules regulating exchanges and women's empowerment opportunities.

Umoja groups represent a rather silent social struggle not only against norms of the banking system, but also against the gendered relations that structure their social environment. Consequently, such 'empowerment' is circumscribed to a small section of the society, limited by their restrictive size and/or protective 'secrecy'. Silent struggles through the creation of an alternative use of forms of exchange as in Umoja, may however be confronted with forms of resistances and contradictions in their recognition, reward, representation or legal protection. Muradian (2015) warns that the homogeneity of women's membership in groups may reinforce women's voice and empowerment (their political representation and economic rewards), but may also impede building relations with external actors (due to their social misrecognition). Similarly, Warnecke (2013) warns that the rise of female entrepreneurship (the case of Umoja members through their facilitated management of savings) would not automatically imply improvements in gender equality. I tend to think that the ability to fight a political struggle and gain economic rewards without modifying the social order, may lead to contradictory and counterintuitive effects on people's empowerment. Fraser (1996: 10), referring to Charles Taylor's work, brings our attention to similar contradictions, when 'difference-blind politics of redistribution can reinforce injustice by falsely universalizing dominant group norms, requiring subordinate groups to assimilate to them, and misrecognising the latter's distinctiveness'. Such concern is vivid in the literature and public comments about targeted social benefits that may strengthen stigma, while trying to solve issues of economic mal-reward, ignoring social recognition as an interrelated challenge.

Moreover, the practices of all the groups are inscribed in a complex dynamic of subjection, emancipation or renegotiation of the dominant principles legitimating one's

level of recognition and reward through exchanges. The agency that people may develop over exchanges according to their relative struggles appears to develop in a continuum of capabilities, such as Näre (2014) suggested. Departing from an account of agency as a dualism ('either/or, or, on/off situation', action/inaction), allows us to account for the interplay between social structures, individual, collective agency and socio-historical agency. Näre (2014: 8) therefore:

proposes to conceptualise agency as a continuum which includes capabilities and opportunities. Agency, then, is understood as comprising of different stages of resistance, action (and non-action), reception and adaptation, as well as various dimensions and capabilities which are intrinsic to individual wellbeing.

7.2.3. In the economic field

As argued earlier, the market field regulates people's levels of opportunity according to the social recognition and economic reward of their participation in profit-making. Social organisations and rules underlying profit-making exchanges will be particularly at stake in struggles happening in the economic field.¹⁷² One may expect people and groups to engage in struggles and articulate claims in this field. However, I argue that the doxa of the economic field greatly deprives people of their agency to struggle against its arbitrariness and unfairness of the power relations brought by the market laws of supply and demand, and people's further social misrecognition and political misrepresentation. The belief that a rational order is enabled through free markets, i.e. the common

¹⁷² By economic field, Bourdieu refers to the field historically constructed and organised around the particular 'nomos' – i.e. the stake that makes the field autonomous – of maximisation of individual profit [See section 3.2.4, p. 93], and organised around relations of economic production. Each subfield may for example 'correspond to an 'industry', understood as a set of firms competing to produce and commercialize a homogeneous category of products' (Bourdieu, 2003: 91), yet they are 'unified' through the 'imposition of the absolute rule of the free exchange' (Bourdieu, 2003: 89).

representation that the 'laws of the market' fairly regulates the rules of the economic redistribution, effectively inhibits those claims.

This is apparent in the case of the Uruguai fishermen. They complain that, through the setting of prices, resellers do not properly appreciate their workforce:

If we sell [to the intermediaries], we do not make profits. (...) The intermediary earns twice as much as we do. He [purchases] fish at 7, 8 reais [per kilo]. He sells for 20, 15, 18 reais. *We are dividing the profit in halves with them...* They buy fish cheaply.

We're fishing in the night while they are asleep, they do not fish anything and just arrive there in the morning wanting to impose a price. Not the price that the fisherman wants. (...) The life of a fisherman is too bad because fishermen sit out fishing all night long. When back, people do not value the fish one has caught. [Being a] fisherman is a tough life. (...) *People have to give value to fishermen because it is a demanding and risky life.* We leave, but we do not know if we will be back. (...) You have to sleep in the middle of the sea; you stay there feeling apprehensive... There is the risk of a ship, as has happened a lot, to overturn your boat and to kill their passengers. (...)

Why are [intermediaries] entitled to earn more than us? They earn because their job is to earn... but they should earn the same as we do! They should earn as little as we earn!

[Fish.2] (emphasis added)

Resellers adopt a competitive definition of price, which is guided by their search for profit and the law of supply and demand. The fishermen translate in their own words the symbolic violence to which they are subject, and which operates as an inconspicuous and surreptitious reminder of the social distance between the fishermen and the resellers. Yet, it illustrates that such violence stems from their complicit submission to the 'self-regulating' laws of price determination, against which they wish to struggle but do not do so.¹⁷³ The fishermen effectively express a sentiment of social misrecognition of the harshness of their activity (and the value that one should give to the risk and time investment of their profit-

¹⁷³ On Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, see section 3.2.3, p. 87

making practice), which the resellers are able to 'ignore'.¹⁷⁴ The fishermen associate such behaviour with the unbalanced division of 'profit' between the actors in the exchange. Regarding those two criteria, and in comparison to the profits gained by intermediaries, fishermen raise a sense of injustice and disparagement. As Massey (2006: 123) noted:

Of course, simple access to markets, in the sense of being admitted as a participant, does not guarantee equality of opportunity, for in addition to being allowed merely to compete the competition must be seen by citizen as 'fair'. (...) [Yet,] what seems fair to one participant may seem quite unfair to another, depending on his or her relative position and power in the marketplace (Hoschschild, 1981).

Such social violence applies through the prejudices the fishermen resent, but cannot denounce, as illegitimate. It echoes the case of the São Joaquim traders evoked earlier in this chapter, who cannot denounce practices of unfair concurrence because the rules applied are thought to be 'something particular to trade' [S.J.3.Emp]. It acts as blinders that hide and jeopardize the valued egalitarian functions developed by the members of the São Joaquim market. Such an understanding, transversal to the economic field, prevents people from denouncing such practices as unjust, but to recognise them as legitimate behaviours. The strength of the liberal doxa acts as a force that prevents Uruguai fishermen, similarly to the São Joaquim traders, from raising claims regarding the misrecognition and mal-reward of their activity in the economic field. In compliance with the liberal rules of the market, the only power to negotiate their recognition and rewards is within the lawful definition of prices, according to the law of the supply and demand, or imputing costs. This can happen through their power to refuse a price:

(Negotiating) is a little difficult, but you can, because we depend on them [intermediaries] to sell, and they depend on us to resell. So, we have to find a

¹⁷⁴ As Bourdieu argued, participating in any field supposes the total endorsement of the doxa and the rule of its game, that is people's *illusio*, despite the fact that it might imply that one suffers the consequences of his/her social domination.

common denominator. If (...) they are reselling for 18 reals, I want them to pay me 14. If he does not pay that, I'll find out who does, then it is a means of negotiating. (...) You have the power to refuse [a price].

[Fish.4]

Additionally, the fishermen only sporadically organise themselves to increase their prices when they have to report an increase in their costs:

It usually takes a while [for prices to change], the price generally increases more when [the price of] fuel and ice increases. (...) We have to work according to inflation. If we all get together, we have [the power to increase prices]. So, if everyone being in union, we then reach a good price.

[Fish.3]

In this case, the negotiation of prices is legitimated after reporting a general increase in prices in the wider market field, rather than representing economic and social claims that seek a positive cognition and redistribution of the fishermen's activity.

7.2.4. A socio-historical agency

The different cases illustrate that groups' ability to struggle, that is, to raise claims or to set alternative empowering exchanges as the opportunity to exert their agency over the arbitrariness of a legitimate principle structuring a field, or over the unfair opportunities and empowerment that such a principle creates, may vary across the social sphere. Groups' ability to struggle may be relative to the members' previous empowerment through exchanges, themselves a function of one's level of social recognition, economic distribution, legal status and political representation and partnership. Because they incorporate such dimensions, exchanges are not only processes but also objects of complex strategies of a fight against the reproduction of social inequalities, which lead to people's unequal empowerment in capabilities. More importantly, such agency appears as a function of doxas, which shape one's difficult process toward finding emancipative spaces of empowerment, due to their proper rules (e.g. from the patriarchy in the familial sphere),

or to its unquestionable authority in society (e.g. the belief in a rational order in the economic sphere). Put another way, people' and groups' abilities to raise claims is a function of the coercive strength of the doxa of the field in which they are involved.

Therefore, the empirical data tends to illustrate that nowadays, it is more difficult to endorse a struggle for empowerment when situated in and against the arbitrariness of the liberal doxa of the market field. The doxa associated with the economic sector has 'conspired to decentre, if not to extinguish, claims of egalitarian redistribution'.¹⁷⁵ People are less likely to use their agency over their disenfranchisement in profit-seeking exchanges because of the doxa of the market field, rather than the different nature of the form. This is unless, like in Camapet, the arbitrariness and lack of conformity of the treatment through dominant forms of exchange, for example in the labour market, is raised as a social and political issue. The struggles for social recognition and political representation also affect the limits and legitimacy of the economic field, as well as the subfield of the recycling industry and the solidarity economy. A few authors such as Laville (2010) or De Sousa Santos and Rodríguez Garavito (2014) note the significant emancipatory potential of the Social and Solidarity Economy, since it gathers groups that relay struggles over doxa associated with dominant principles ruling the economic and political fields, 'given its association with political empowerment and identity politics via contestation, active citizenship and claims making' (Utting et al., 2014: 6). Yet, I illustrated through the case of Camapet, that they might suffer the consequence of such political conquests through discriminative treatment in the economic field. If the access to free materials and the association with a complex of peer cooperatives improve their economic advantage,

¹⁷⁵ I borrow this formulation from Fraser, who denounced not only the conspiracy of 'the surge of free-market ideology', but also of 'the demise of communism', and 'the rise of 'identity politics' in both its fundamentalist and progressive forms' (Fraser, 1996: 4).

nevertheless it exacerbates the resistance of other actors, guardians of the liberal doxa, to recognising the cooperative as legitimate actors in the market field.

Yet, as illustrated in all the cases, one's relation to the legitimating principle of classification in a field, as well as such a principle itself, are likely to evolve over time and to one's level of agency. São Joaquim has offered an example that corroborates the importance of people's agency over the realisation of their valued objective (e.g. pursuing profit-making exchanges to ensure one's livelihood). The members face a passive 'empowering' situation, in which they might see their valued objective facilitated, and their levels of empowerment increased. The influence of the state or general public guarantees their opportunity to maintain and pursue exchanges, and their empowerment. This section therefore argues that alongside people's agency, sociocultural settings matter for defining one's need, but also one's opportunity to struggle and to influence their empowerment.

Struggles and claims may effectively be endorsed, consolidated and relayed by different actors, more or less legitimate, involved in different fields and at different levels of the social sphere. For example, experiences such as with Umoja and Camapet greatly gain from the struggle and advocacy pursued by powerful institutions and academics, such as the work of Paul Singer (2004, 2014), who have contributed significantly to the recognition and legitimation of principles associated with the solidarity economy and finance in Brazil. The influence of his work over Brazilian policies constitutes another example of the socio-historical structure that enables not only opportunities to function and get empowered, but also of the 'collective action' that, beyond the actor, 'change the structures and transform them into structures enabling individual human beings to acquire agency and exercise choice' (Deneulin, 2008a: 119). Such 'socio-historical structures' constitute the context that enables (or entails) people's 'socio-historical agency', such as in particular, their ability to pursue social struggles, raise claims and have them taken into account. It can partly explain why, in the case of Umoja, actors find it easier to pursue a

claim for redistribution, representation and legal protection, regarding their empowering dynamics towards the members in the political sphere, than to challenge the social misrecognition and economic exclusion relative to their evolution in a patriarchal familial sphere. Similarly to the fact that people's agency is socio-historically enabled, the capability to struggle against an illegitimate principle to rule a field, or to raise specific claims to guarantee one's empowerment, is enabled by the group as a collective capability.

7.2.5. Freedom vs. agency

In the earlier examples, the improvement of a group's levels of exchange appeared to be a consequence of the active (or the absence of) negotiation of their social misrecognition, economic mal-reward, political misrepresentation and legal misprotection, in function of the legitimacy of their struggle in different (sub-)fields. Yet, Sen argues that one's freedom goes beyond (if not against) one's ability to operate directly 'the level of control', he therefore opts out of considering one's agency¹⁷⁶ when contemplating people's capabilities. Effectively, the case of the São Joaquim has illustrated and confirmed that agency is not the only motor that drives the evolution of traders' opportunities.

However, the section has demonstrated that, if we recognise the unequal outcome of exchanges in terms of enabling and facilitating capabilities (despite being complex and equivocal), we also need to make sense of people's unequal ability to struggle against the legitimate principles that rule their recognition, reward and empowerment in exchanges. Sen insists that people's agency does not matter as soon as they have developed effective capabilities. I argue however, that it does matters because their agency translates their

¹⁷⁶ For Sen (1992b), one's level of agency is relative to the kind of freedom one has over his objectives. He defines one's agency as the control over the realisation of his/her objective. See Table 4, p.51

unequal power to influence their empowerment through exchanges, and may greatly matter in the reproduction (and in the sharpening) of social inequalities. Similarly, Sen misses the fact that one's 'ability to get what he values or wants', in a social context 'in line with our 'counterfactual decisions'' (1992b: 64) is likely to be only the case for dominant and advantaged actors. Sen's position therefore ignores that the lower opportunities of more disadvantaged sections of the society in their attempt to achieve what they value are due not only to their greater need, but also to their lack of agency.

People's capability deprivation can be complementarily defined as the key outcome of the nexus of their social, economic, political and legal treatment translated into their relative empowerment in exchanges, beyond people's unequal agency over such treatment. Those dimensions (recognition, reward, representation, and protection) are likely to evolve symmetrically, but may also evolve in a non-synchronic way and pose different concerns (such as noted in the case of Umoja). Converging with Fraser's (2004: 376) analysis, they constitute 'co-fundamental dimensions of justice which are mutually irreducible although practically intertwined'. The recognition of Camapet's role by the wider social sphere (as accreditation of the doxa of the Social and Solidarity Economy as a subfield) and its coalition with the public, but also its stronger political struggle, all go hand in hand with Camapet's wider opportunities and levels of redistribution of resources. In the example of Camapet, claims for recognition and distribution in the wider social sphere can further improve not only their social recognition, but also may enable economic redistribution through stimulating exchanges.¹⁷⁷ This illustrates that through the pursuit of struggles, social, political and economic spheres of assessment of the actors are directly interrelated.

¹⁷⁷ A greater economic reward may similarly translate into a greater political representation and social recognition, power to lobby or to 'corrupt' a system such as the example of the contract denounced for the trash management.

Forms of deprivation attached to people's unequal agency can therefore be considered as the unequal outcome of a struggle for power (Bourdieu, 1977b).

7.3. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to answer the following sub-research question: *To what extent can people's (un)equal level and set of capabilities be associated with people's agency over exchanges?*

The argument has been that agents are able to negotiate the realisation of their valued objective and levels of empowerment in function of two different capabilities that enable them to exert their agency over exchanges. On the one hand, their agency may pass through their ability to accumulate resources and functionings, allowing them to maintain their level of empowerment or to seek more opportunities by accessing more exchanges. On the other hand, agency may correspond to people's ability to raise claims against the principles guiding their social misrecognition, economic maldistribution, legal misprotection and political misrepresentation that condition their exchanges, or to set alternative empowering exchanges when their opportunities are not guaranteed socio-historically.

One's level of empowerment and capability deprivation through exchanges appears to be not only the effect of forms of exchange, but also the effect of people's ability to accumulate resources, or to pursue game-changing struggles, that is, to set alternative exchanges or to raise social, economic, legal, and representative claims. Both forms of agency effectively enable people to modify either the patterns or levels of their recognition, or their weighted rewards in functionings and resources in exchange, which consequently influence people's unequal enablement and facilitation of capabilities. Therefore, this chapter concludes that people's agency over the realisation of their objectives through

exchanges matters because it modifies one's chance to improve his/her level of empowerment. However, people's ability to pursue a strategy of accumulation or to struggle is affected by their previous endowment as well as the structure of their legal and political inequalities and freedom. Those are materialized through exchanges and unequal facilitation of resources and functionings. Yet, because of people's unequal opportunity to accumulate or disadvantaged social position, agency may reinforce or challenge previous social inequalities.

Chapter 8. **Conclusion**

This research has brought together sociological, economic and social justice concerns, providing new empirical evidence, for understanding the ‘exchange - capability’ relation in a developmental context, and its decisive role in one’s empowerment. This research is therefore important because it addresses many cleavages that still dominate debates in development studies, and offers a nascent theory on the relation between exchanges and capabilities.

This concluding chapter aims to recapitulate the focus, conceptual framework and methods used in this research. The central argument has been that people’s deprivation or unequal levels of capabilities is the comprehensive outcome of complex combinations and cultural interpretations of the different forms of exchange, and also individual and collective forms of control over the latter. The empirical findings raise fundamental concerns about the central role of exchanges in guaranteeing people’s freedom to be and do what they value, and constitute a new departure point to open fruitful debates about their instrumental role in development.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section brings together the conceptual framework and analysis built throughout this thesis and summarises key research findings. The second section goes on to discuss the reach and contribution that the research has made. The third section discusses developmental concerns that have been raised in the research. Finally, a fourth section presents the possibility of further research that can build on and extend the work of this thesis.

8.1. Key findings

This research has been concerned with understanding exchanges and their contribution to people's unequal empowerment and capabilities in a developmental context. It has addressed the main research question:

How do forms of exchange contribute to people's empowerment in capabilities?

In the first part of the thesis, I argued that combining the theories of Polanyi, Sen and Bourdieu provides a conceptual framework for approaching forms of exchange, capabilities as an evaluative framework, and their relation as immersed and materialising structure and agency dynamics. Firstly, Polanyi's distinction of the 'forms of integration' which he developed in his book *The Great Transformation* (1944), as a combination of institutional and behavioural patterns of interaction established between individuals, is of great importance for the study of the different forms of exchange. Sen's CA represents an attempt to overcome previous institutional approaches to social justice in order to account for gauging the freedom and the 'individual advantage' of a person (Sen, 2010: 232-3). In this thesis, it complements a Polanyian approach with a framework for evaluating the effect of exchanges on the individual's freedom, raised as the main matter of social justice and development. However, the concept of capabilities in the CA is still delimited to the ethical concerns for defining the most appropriate space to evaluate people's disadvantage. I have argued here that Sen and the capabilities literatures miss not only approaching capabilities as the most informative picture of one's state of poverty and inequalities, but also as the most comprehensive space for investigating the (structuralism, sociological and agency) dynamics that reproduce one's advantages in society. Finally, a Bourdieusian approach allows us to consider how exchanges and capabilities operate in a complex interaction with social structures and the unequal agency that social structures confer on people. Consequently, the thesis considers people's unequal capabilities to be the result of

a structural and agency dynamics shaping one's opportunities, which are mediated through exchanges. More particularly, it invites the consideration of exchanges as shaped by the symbolic appreciation of people's different resources, identities and life-styles, through the definition of legitimate exchanges and rewards. Moreover, it encourages accounting for the different participation of agents in legitimate rules of exchanges as rules of recognition and rewards likely to modify one's level of capability. Bourdieu moreover allows us to understand institutions (e.g. the state in the political field, or markets) as legitimate actors of fields and struggles, or as fields themselves, whose independent yet 'hierarchized' doxas influence people's schemes of perception and action.

The second part of the thesis draws on empirical research based on case studies in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. This research focused on four groups of the Old-Alagados neighbourhood: the São Joaquim local market place, the scavenger cooperative Camapet, the self-help saving groups Umoja and an informal association of Uruguai fishermen. Semi-structured interviews with members and participant observation investigated (1) the different forms of exchange sustained and their patterns, (2) the association of opportunities to function and access to resources, (3) the control of agents over exchange practices and their empowerment. Interviews with institutional partners and government representatives were also collected in order to provide some further contextual information.

In the different groups investigated, exchanges have enabled three essential opportunities for people: firstly, the ability to socialise and to function in a particular *status-quo*; secondly, the ability to access and renew their resources, which facilitate and help to maintain different functionings; thirdly, the ability to address distributive concerns. However, exchanges regulate people's different spaces and levels of opportunity to function. They create tangible differences in terms of functionings and capabilities between people. The way in which exchanges shape people's unequal opportunities to access and renew resources, or to get involved into social interactions, is critical because it affects

further their opportunities to seek or make use of their relative empowerment. Exchanges may also shape their opportunity to decide how to solve distributive matters (as their agency over the exchange). Understanding people's (lack of) capabilities therefore raises the question of their unequal experience and relative treatment according to forms of exchange.

Chapter 5 has first investigated how recurring patterns of social interaction and distribution that structure daily practices, modulate people's unequal freedom and opportunities to be and do what they value. It has addressed the following question:

What are the characteristics of forms of exchange? Can forms of exchange be associated with people's empowerment in capabilities?

To do so, I have offered a 'neo-Polanyian' categorisation of the forms of exchange defined according to their particular (behavioural, administrative and procedural) patterns. Firstly, 'equality-matching exchanges' maintain symmetry between people and balance their relative participation and endowment (procedural). People's similar identity (behavioural), and the respect of transparency and loyalty (administrative) facilitate the form. Secondly, in 'status-led exchanges' people recognise their different nature/levels of duties, roles and power (procedural), which they naturalize (behavioural), and according to which they build a clear asymmetrical system of command, order and control (administrative). Thirdly, in 'mutual-assistance' people are able to care for the others involved in the exchange, with whom they share similar life-style (behavioural), and are reciprocally prone to help (procedural), in negotiated circumstances (administrative). Fourthly, in 'equal-opportunity exchanges' people maintain their equal abilities and opportunities (administrative) and endorse overarching criteria (behavioural) in order to institute and legitimate democratic decision processes (procedural). Fifthly and in parallel, people are guided in 'profit-seeking

exchanges' by a cost-benefit analysis (procedural), the need to manage profit-making uncertainties (administrative) and to comply with negotiated contracts (behavioural).

Those forms tend to ground different principles of social inequality, and to legitimate unequal structures of opportunity to function or to gather resources. They correspond to different schemes of interpretation and production of the social order, shaping principles behind the social appreciation and endowment of people. Forms of exchange therefore materialise the unequal social value and consideration of the people involved (the object of their exchange or their life-styles), in the weighted apportionment of their functionings and the resources they may or not access. Yet, the data illustrates that we cannot understand the extent to which exchanges structure people's unequal capabilities simply through the account of the forms, because they do not represent clear-cut or forthright structures shaping people's unequal empowerment. Their impact appears more complex or contradictory because of their immersion in more complex procedural and cultural structures and agency dynamics.

Chapter 6 has considered the dynamics that structure the use of exchanges and the unequal empowerment that they enable. Investigating the structural level of such a relation, the research has shed light on the following problem:

To what extent do forms of exchange structure people's (un)equal empowerment in capabilities?

The data has demonstrated that two different structural dynamics can illustrate the extent to which forms of exchange structure people's unequal empowerment in capabilities.

Firstly, the forms may leave some distributive matters unsolved. For example, profit-seeking exchanges explain neither how the production and the distribution of profit should be organised, nor how to manage the uncertainties of these activities. Mutual-assistance exchanges set the moment in which a group may intervene for the sake of some members,

but leave the nature and level of the participation and distribution of the help unsolved. Equal-opportunity exchanges demand the promotion and incentive to knowledge whose operation needs to be resolved. This explains why forms of exchange are articulated in three different ways: they are juxtaposed according to fragmented distributive matters, combined in order to reinforce practices, or they may be transformed over time. The complex entanglement of forms may modify or reinforce the nature and intensity of their inequalitarian empowering outcome. For example, the distributive 'arbitrariness' of a form such as profit-seeking, often associated with selfish and stingy behaviours, may gain from the mobilisation and the strength of a collective and feed an egalitarian space of capabilities (such as within Camapet or further cooperatives). The structure that forms of exchange represent for enabling and facilitating people's unequal capabilities is complex and equivocal, building on their combinations within social spaces and allowing different meanings and social outcomes.

Secondly, the data suggest that exchanges and their unequal empowering outcomes should also be understood as practices and habits shaped by different cultural understandings, that are socially situated and a function of the doxa of a (sub-)field. It influences their symbolic value, empowering strength or legitimate use. Firstly, doxas (beliefs associated with particular fields of practice) determine the legitimate association of distributive concerns with specific forms of exchange. Secondly, they define people's legitimate attributes, and their relative degrees (rather than patterns) of recognition and reward through exchanges, which sharpen the patterns and intensity of people's unequal empowerment. Finally, exchanges are themselves subject to cultural interpretations of the empowerment they may mediate and, of the use of the resources to which they give access. This passes mainly through the attribution of different symbolic appreciations of the distributive concerns, the individuals involved or of the forms of exchange that they use. The cultural variations related to the use of forms of exchange in different doxas and fields

also matter for making sense of the dominant use of forms of exchange, and their importance in society for unequally enabling or facilitating people's capabilities. Those two elements for making sense of the procedural and cultural dynamics that structure the use of forms of exchange and their unequal empowerment.

Chapter 7 addresses the question of the level of agency that people may exert over the 'exchange - capability' relation, and this research finally asked:

To what extent can people's unequal empowerment in capabilities be associated with their agency over exchanges?

People's or groups' agency may influence the structures of their disempowerment in exchanges, and in consequence, their relative level of capabilities. Two different forms of agency occur. Firstly, individuals and collectives have gained greater opportunities through their accumulation of resources and functionings. Through such control, people develop the ability to maintain their opportunity to function, or choose to function through different more discriminative exchanges, through which they may ultimately develop further capabilities. Therefore, one's ability to accumulate resources may widen his/her opportunity to maintain a function, or to access resources and further, empowering, exchanges. Secondly, individuals and collectives have raised their level of empowerment by getting involved in struggles over the legitimate principles that rule (sub-)fields, and that guide their treatment through exchanges. Groups raise claims over their relative level of social misrecognition and economic mal-reward in exchange, which led to their relative (dis)empowerment. They may also raise claims over their relative level of legal misprotection and political misrepresentation, which undermines their levels of empowerment through exchange. People's and groups' agency over the negotiation of their empowerment represents an essential capability which matters in order to complete a

comprehensive assessment of people's unequal (processes of) empowerment through exchanges.

To conclude, this research develops a new understanding of the relative capability deprivation experienced by the members of the four groups of exchanges in Salvador. Their level of capabilities appears not only as the outcome of unfair standards of justice materialised in forms of exchange, but also as the outcome of their negotiated association, which may be reinforced through the symbolic understanding of forms' association with distributive matters, social values and cultural constraints. It is also the effect of people's (relative or absolute) inability to accumulate resources or to pursue game-changing struggles and social, economic, legal, and representative claims. Such an approach challenges the common perception of the dynamics sustaining poverty (i.e. capability deprivation) and inequalities (i.e. unequal opportunity to be and do what one's value). Rather than seeing these as simply the product of unfair institutions or 'malfunctioning' individuals, it shows that poverty and inequalities are inscribed into our social relations and the opportunities they give us, reproducing unequal social structures that exchanges materialise.

8.2. Contributions, reach and limits

This thesis has faced the challenge of bringing together substantially different schools of thought from economic anthropology, social justice and sociology, but also of integrating empirical data, for the sake of initiating a theoretical reflection about the relation between exchanges and capabilities. Its design has shaped both its theoretical and empirical contributions, but also their reach and limits.

8.2.1. Theoretical contributions

This thesis builds upon different academic literatures, bringing together questions and analysis from economic anthropology, social justice and sociology.

Firstly, the thesis revisits the economic sociology literature, and more particularly the Polanyian approach. It proposes a new categorisation of the different forms of exchange, discusses their nature in the interface between agency and structures, and exposes their potential social impacts on people's unequal capabilities. It deepens Polanyi's interest for the study of exchanges as a 'developmental concern'¹⁷⁸. It allows us to make sense of exchanges beyond institutions and economic sectors, and it clarifies the meaning of the notions of solidarity and reciprocity traditionally qualifying non-profit exchanges. It overcomes the opposition between profit-seeking and non-profit exchanges by highlighting their continuous entanglement and permeability to the unequal recognition and rewards that non-profit exchanges materialise.

Secondly, it resonates with the field of sociology, building particularly on the legacy of Pierre Bourdieu. It illustrates how a Bourdieusian approach may be fruitful in the analysis of monist dynamics involved in exchanges and in defining one's capabilities, and illustrates how the latter are key elements of social distinction, objects of struggles and mechanisms of the reproduction of social inequalities.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the thesis contributes to social justice debates, building particularly on the ontological exercise of Sen's CA and feeding debates on its ethical implications. This thesis does not question the relevance of the CA in terms of reframing the moral account of poverty and inequalities. The thesis builds on the shift from

¹⁷⁸ See footnote 10

this institutional (arrangement-focused) tradition introduced by the focus on capabilities in Sen's CA. Rather, it produces an understanding of the role of exchanges in the unequal development of people's capabilities. It invites us to approach social justice in terms of the dynamic interplay of social structures and agency dynamics that practices of exchange materialise. Yet, its findings feed into a debate regarding the ethical value given to people's agency over their own empowerment: Sen's standpoint that capabilities only count as real opportunities at the level of individuals effectively overlooks people's or groups' disparate abilities to secure them and the exponential empowerment opportunities that some may gain rather than others thanks to their agency. Therefore, the thesis argues that to make sense of one's disadvantage, we should embrace more information than one's wellbeing, freedom and his/her realized agency success.¹⁷⁹ This thesis suggests we should account for the social and agency dynamics that shape the social reproduction of people's unequal empowerment, mainly through exchanges. It therefore questions freedom as the ultimate aim of development policies, without anticipating people's unequal agency, or questioning their lack of opportunity from lack of agency.

The thesis has addressed the challenge by focusing on three pertinent authors: Polanyi, Sen and Bourdieu as well as limited references to other schools of thought. This strategy has two implications. First, more emphasis has been given to the way in which the theory of the different authors can complementarily help solve the research question in the theoretical part of the thesis. The thesis' theoretical contributions are situated in the academic literature *a priori* rather than *a posteriori*. Gaps in the authors' approaches were identified to produce a combined framework, as a way to offer alternative ontological, methodological or ethical perspectives, and by focusing on exchanges and capabilities. I

¹⁷⁹ See section 2.3.2, p.49

have therefore evocated different debates around the Polanyian, Senian or Bourdieusian approaches, and explained how this thesis, in line or differently from their actual development, builds on the legacy of the previous authors. However, due to lack of space and time, this thesis could not include a comprehensive discussion and critical analysis of how the nature of such reinterpretations, and also the empirical findings, may challenge or contribute back to the academic legacy of the three authors, a posteriori. This has been left out for future papers, which could for example discuss the fundamental differences between, and the extent to which, adopting a dualist or a monist approach to the agency-structure relation may affect the comprehensiveness of the sociological understanding of capabilities, or ethical discussion related the promotion of people's capabilities. Similarly, discussing the way in which specifying the ontological statement implied by Polanyi's use of 'forms of integration', which resemble structural anthropology, can help in reassessing the strengths and weaknesses of Polanyi's legacy, but also reinforcing and re-actualising his approach.

Second, I realise that the data and theory developed in the second part of this thesis present a rather limited discussion of their convergences and divergences with arguments of other related and pertinent schools of thought (political economy, development studies or economic sociology focused on real markets or on welfare institutions, or solidarity economy and third sector scholarship), which this thesis may echo and may have quoted. Unfortunately, this has not been possible here but is envisaged as later contributions.

8.2.2. Empirical contributions

This research has adopted a case study approach focused on the relationship between exchanges and capabilities experienced by members of the four groups of exchanges of the Old-Alagados neighbourhood in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. The concern for the

generalisation of the findings¹⁸⁰ revolves around the focus on Brazil, on the neighbourhood of the Old-Alagados in Salvador, and on the case studies selected to adduce the knowledge about the relative expansion of their capabilities through exchanges.

The focus of this study on Brazil has been justified by the recent changes in Brazil, partly provoked through different intentional policies of development: re-democratisation of society, the recognition and emergence of the third sector and the fight against poverty. It represents a particular momentum of interest for the study of the immanent changes captured in the 'exchange - capability' relation. This particular momentum particularly resonates with the question of the relation between the increase of freedoms and the increase of alternative forms of exchange, and with the decrease of poverty, the ultimate concern of this study. In any case, Brazil represents an interesting case for the study of social inequalities. Similarly, the choice of the Old-Alagados neighbourhood as a site for the empirical investigation represents an atypical case: the concentration of actors of the third sector and of solidarity bonds between people can be seen as a social phenomenon of interest. Therefore, the neighbourhood constitutes an important case for illustrating the political, social and economic changes happening in Brazil. Both choices are instrumental in the sense that they are thought to provide a great amount of data and a particular insight into the 'exchange - capability' relation. The events happening in those cases are not typical of other cases. However, the study of the 'exchange - capability' relation has been designed to provide the most generalizable representation of forms of exchange in a developmental context.

¹⁸⁰ '[E]xternal validity generalizations [refers to concerns regarding] inferences about whether the causal relationship holds over variation in persons, settings, treatment, and measurement variables' (Shadish et al., 2002: 20).

The data has gained from an ‘information-oriented’ selection of multiple cases within the Old-Alagados neighbourhood, according to the wider diversity of practices and social purposes of the different groups. This has allowed a detailed comparative approach of the forms of exchange which they developed, and their relation to people’s empowerment in capabilities. As Giddens (1984: 328) explains:

Pieces of ethnographic research like (...) the traditional small-scale community research of fieldwork anthropology – are not in themselves generalizing studies. But they can easily become so if carried out in some numbers, so that judgements of their typicality can justifiably be made.

Taking on board Giddens’ point, the wealth of the cross-comparison and the focus on diverse cases have aimed to produce a credible categorisation of forms of exchange and their impact on people’s capabilities.¹⁸¹ Even if the research excluded the possibility of analysing and comparing the ‘exchange - capability’ relation in different historical, geographical and political settings, I tend to agree with Polanyi that forms of integration should be generalizable across different countries and times, but also that they are transversal to cultures and social spheres. If we could generalise the knowledge about the forms of exchange, then we could generalise the knowledge raised about the ‘exchange - capability’ relation and its porosity to contextual structures and agencies.

The conceptual framework and methodological approach have been explained comprehensively in order to allow theoretical and empirical replications. Future empirical studies may complement, confirm or contradict the findings of this study. In parallel, I have stressed the contextual dependence of the results, through the influence of the particular socio-cultural use of the forms and people’s agency over the ‘exchange -

¹⁸¹ I consider that the forms investigated here through the cases studies inform most forms of exchange. As noted earlier, ‘utility-satisfaction’ may be a seventh form of exchange, which I have not been able to make sense of in this research. Therefore, I do not claim to develop an exhaustive description of the forms ruling practices of exchanges.

capability' relation. Therefore, if some elements of this research may be generalizable, many elements of the 'exchange - capability' relation are contextual. This is the case for:

- the structure of fields in which forms of exchange are interpreted, and the association between social, cultural and economic matters (environmental or social standard and what fields they need to rule),
- the doxic interpretation and use of exchanges: the association between forms of exchange and distributive concerns, the value of forms of exchange themselves,
- the cultural (symbolic and doxic) social appreciation of people, resources and functionings, and of their weighted apportionment of functionings and resources,
- the socio-historical and doxic possibility to carry out struggles over legitimate principles of legitimation, or to raise claims (or have their claims heard) in order to secure one's empowerment through exchange.

The four case studies of Salvador illustrate a relationship between exchanges and capabilities in constant evolution. The knowledge generated in this research is thus of two kinds. Firstly, it is a contextual knowledge about contemporary social and cultural settings that make sense of the unequal empowering opportunities that members of the four case studies are facing in Salvador, and their relative position, struggles and claims. Secondly, it has served to explain the complex relationship between exchanges and people's capabilities, which make sense of the different structural, cultural and agency dynamics to which it is sensible. The study only assumes the last kind of knowledge to be generalizable.

8.3. New developmental debates

Beyond its contribution to the capabilitarian approach, and therefore to the field of social justice, this research indirectly yet strongly interrogates development paradigms that have assumed the fair realisation of profit-seeking exchanges and growth, or state redistribution, as two opposed sectors of the economy. In particular, it brings new evidence that questions the link between profit-seeking and equal-opportunity, and the candid endorsement of redistribution, or solidarity as automatically positive features of any non-profit-seeking exchange (only). It reintroduces analytical tools that have the capacity to make sense of the complexity of the relation between exchanges and people's empowerment, and of its possible contradictions. These findings are of interest, particularly because of their capacity to make sense of the reproduction of people's unequal empowerment (or deprivation) in capabilities according to social structures and struggles of power. It invites us to revise development paradigm in order to account for the central role of (structures and cultures of) exchanges in guaranteeing one's capabilities as freedom.

The question may arise as to whether the results of this thesis invalidate the role of politics and the state in development. However, that is not the agenda of this thesis. On the contrary, making sense of development as an immanent process of empowerment and disempowerment through exchanges, I adopt a sociological concern for highlighting the invisible tensions and conflicts of power that naturally operate in society, and that actors and intentional projects of development may exacerbate, but should regulate. Building a framework to assess the comprehensive outcome of this immanent form of development should serve as a tool to design and evaluate development projects, according to their aim to build on and strengthen desired (or to fight against undesired) consequences of particular use of forms of exchange. Such an approach does not invalidate looking at

development as an intentional practice, nor at the role of the state in this endeavour. It aims rather to capture how such intervention is embedded in and influences an immanent process of development happening in society. It also aims to challenge the idea that the market or the third sectors represent fair institutions in line with a liberal agenda. To do so, the thesis argues for enquiring into how social policies and legislations modify the 'exchange - capability' relation, and for critically analysing whether such reorientation of relational (dis)empowering processes, as an immanent form of development, converges or diverges with the intentions of development policies.

Firstly, such lessons can generate new awareness regarding development as an immanent process of change (Cowen and Shenton, 1996: 162) happening in society. Centring the understanding of people's (relative and absolute) capability deprivation on the analysis of their lack of opportunity through exchanges has the potential to fill in the gap between the macro and the micro picture of social inequalities and injustice. Individuals, but also the globalised use of specific combinations of exchange, can help to make sense of the unequal social distribution of people's capabilities. This may help to link both sides of the 'diffraction of the social judgement', which we may experience in our ability to discuss rather than act towards the resolution of social inequalities.¹⁸² Inequalities, which raise a concern of social development at a global level, are effectively the product of configurations of exchange legitimated and used at a micro scale. Exchanges are at the heart of an immanent form of development: societies witness a constant evolution through simultaneous movements of empowerment and disempowerment that their exchanges

¹⁸² I borrow this idea from Rosanvallon's (2011: 17, my translation) argument of the 'Bossuet's paradox': objective social facts highlighting inequalities of outcomes may be denounced and rejected, while the mechanisms, individual behaviours and choices that condition inequalities are still legitimated. He particularly denounces the use of market, legitimized by equity principles, as a 'situation in which individuals generally deplore what they consent to in particular'.

materialise. Their legitimacy and outcomes must therefore be questioned. Such an approach challenges the common perception of the dynamics sustaining poverty and inequalities. Rather than seeing these as simply the product of unfair institutions or ‘malfunctioning’ individuals, it shows that poverty and inequalities are inscribed into our social relations. It offers the opportunity to look at the general and particular cultural understanding and conflicts of power behind the use and empowering opportunities associated with combinations of forms of exchange. This allows us to point out the most undesirable tendencies behind the unequal deprivation of the population, but also to assess the efficiency of development policies in tackling the source of the problem. It departs from a top-down and abstract concern for human development, people’s self-determination and the protection of their freedom. It offers an assessment of policies and practices regarding their developmental outcome, and the chance to hold some critical detachment from the conflicts of power of which they may be the subject. Therefore, I argue that the categorisation of the forms of exchange and the understanding of the ‘exchange - capability’ relation can help us to better conceptualise and question the interconnection between global concerns for poverty and inequalities, development policies¹⁸³, and people’s daily practices.

Secondly, exchanges not only explain the relational specificities of one’s opportunities in respect of his/her position and power in fields. They also shed light on the unequal access and distribution of capabilities in our societies and the distributive conflicts

¹⁸³ I have particularly developed this argument in a paper that I presented at the ISA Annual Convention in New Orleans. In this paper, I discuss the promise of using the categorisation of the forms of exchange developed in this thesis, and understanding of the further structural and agency dynamics which they endorse, in order to make sense of (the evolution of) development paradigms and of their social impact. It is based on the observation that development policies – whether passing through the social protection schemes, growth, formal employment, or focusing on community development as example – act through the prevention, promotion and initiation of some particular practices of exchanges, which become the main tools for fighting (or reproducing some forms of) poverty or inequalities.

that are key in widening one's empowerment. Exchanges should constitute a central concern for development studies and policy practice, given their role in shaping people's unequal capabilities. The thesis leads to the conclusion that, if we understand development as the promotion of people's freedom, that is to say as the expansion of their opportunities to be and do what they value, then we should understand that freedom develops in competitive degrees and spaces, in function of people's or group's agencies, objective and symbolic structures, and the advent of exchanges. I therefore argue that development strategies that pursue the project of promoting people's freedom, should account for and address people's lack of opportunity to function through exchanges, and make sense of the unequal structure of empowerment those offer. It requires seeing exchanges as tools for social justice and development policies. It means maintaining people's opportunity to pursue any exchanges that they value in order to achieve the different functionings that these may enable. It invites considering when not only profit-seeking, but also other exchanges, may be regarded as deficient¹⁸⁴ in respect of one's freedom to function, or the unequal empowerment they promote. This calls for assessing the weak occurrence or the reasons for the absence of forms of exchange to resolve any distributive matter, one's difficulty to access them, or their failure to meet social expectations regarding their unequal outcomes. Moreover, to analyse (particular combinations of forms of) exchanges as providing people with the ability to solve distributive matters is important for

¹⁸⁴ Market failure as been used as a 'diagnostic tool by which policymakers learned how to objectively determine the exact scope and type of [their] intervention' in respect of the market (Zerbe and McCurdy, 1999). Market failures have been defined in function of 'the inability of a market economy to reach certain desirable outcomes in resource use' (Mrinal, 1990: 25), or the 'circumstance where the pursuit of private interest does not lead to an efficient use of society's resources or a fair distribution of society's goods' (Weimer and Vining, 2005: 41). Yet, in reviving this concept, I do not assume that profit-seeking is to regulate all domains of our society, neither that it should be seen as the only (in)efficient way to distribute resources and opportunities to function. On the contrary, I claim that we should extend the diagnostic of the propensity of situated forms of exchange to reach the outcomes desired by society, and therefore to define the need to intervene and seek better alternatives.

understanding our empirical ability, rather than our rationality, for assessing and tackling injustices. Therefore, this would help to confront practice and theories with their potential and limits. It compels us to question, along with the capabilities that matter for people, the exchanges that people value pursuing or (should) pursue with respect their potential for shaping one's unequal resources, functionings, and further opportunities. It equally calls for justifying the spaces in which inequalities are legitimate, but also to ponder the 'social impact' of such inequalities in constraining people's further opportunities.

Thirdly, the approach questions the form of intervention necessary in cases of deficient exchange, and complementarily, how we may address undesired gaps of empowerment between people. Two elements may be of great use in this endeavour. On the one hand, we may re-centre on the importance of state mechanisms of legal protection, political representation and the state's direct intervention through subventions and partnerships. They (should) play a crucial role in levelling out people's empowerment. However, Bourdieu taught that what matters more for empowering a population is not simply giving access to exchanges, but also dealing with the symbolic (social) misrecognition and (economic) mal-reward that people endure through exchanges:

political action must target not only institutions (i.e., historical systems of positions objectified in the public sphere) but also dispositions (schemata of perception, appreciation, and action deposited inside social agents). For genuine and lasting progressive change to occur, a politics of fields aimed at structured power relations must of necessity be supplemented by a politics of habitus

(Wacquant, 2004: 10)

It comes to interrogate the extent to which legal, representative or economic policies can lead to or contradict 'politics of recognition', but also to review their central role in eventually guaranteeing one's level of entitlement in society. It invites us to consider, at a moral level, whether the principles legitimating one's (dis)advantages and (mis)opportunities in exchanges, such as in the (particularly individualistic) pursuit of

profit for example, justify people's further (dis)empowerment and position in a vicious cycle of reproduction of inequalities of opportunities.

On the other hand, another question regarding one's freedom would be to enquire about people's constrained opportunity to function and maintain their capabilities through particular (understanding of) forms of exchange, such as, for example, one's unavoidable submission to the rules of the labour market. Recognising the diversity of forms of exchange through which one may develop different functionings and capabilities contextualises the notion of choice. Today, because of the acceptance of its self-evident logic, 'capitalism is naturalised and normalised at the same time as human rationality is degraded and denied' (Chandler, 2013: 22). On the contrary, the diversity of exchanges, the complex and equivocal possibilities to resolve distributive matters through the combination of different forms of exchange, may be seen as a rich range of opportunity to contradict or reinforce the unequal way in which exchanges may enable or facilitate people's capabilities. It offers to re-orientate the empowering possibilities of some exchanges and to fight against the inequalities of opportunities that they may provoke. However, any promotion of (combinations of) forms of exchange should urge the question of their impact with respect to the promotion of certain exchanges or capabilities. Attributing greater value to certain exchanges, or the capabilities they are thought to promote, may have enduring consequences. It questions the kind of empowerment that a particular form of exchange could stimulate with respect to the disadvantaged, but also the effect of such choice over people's 'directed' freedom. Shall we worry that they may provoke the inhibition of other, less regarded capabilities or exchanges, which minorities may value? Would such choice still justify people's further disadvantage and unequal opportunities? It questions the possibility and importance of designing policies that could promote value-free or constraint-free freedoms to exchange and to achieve.

Finally, and in line with Sen's approach, this thesis does not pretend that one's agency matters as an evaluative framework to capture levels of poverty and inequalities. Yet, I argued that beyond their effective freedom, people's agency namely their ability to accumulate resources or to engage in struggles, equally determines their opportunity to achieve. Taking one's level of agency into account matters, if the expansion of one's set of capabilities aims to address previous disadvantages. Moreover, the research converges with Chandler's (2013:22) position that promoting people's agency should not be understood as 'the subject's lack of capabilities', but rather as the product of 'external structures of power relations.' As the author explains, such understanding is opposed to

development programmes [which] work on empowering and giving 'agency' to the individual to enable them to make better behavioural choices – to govern themselves through reason – rather than on the external world of social and economic relations (...). [Those latter act as] barriers to human freedom (...) [and] human cognition.

One's level of agency should be approached in continuity to social structures rather than as another opportunity to blame people for their disempowerment:

Hence, the relevant question to ask is not whether a person can express her agency, or, to what extent she is a victim of the social forces, but rather, in which ways and under what kind of conditions can she practise her agency despite structural constraints, what are the outcomes (the various forms of individual and social change) that her agency brings about, and in which ways could her capability to act be enforced?

(Näre, 2014: 3)

One's (lack of) agency over the realisation of their actual and future objectives also reflects the notions of self-empowerment¹⁸⁵ and self-determination, as new buzzwords of social

¹⁸⁵ Murphy (2014: 325-6) adopts a positive definition of self-empowerment as

development policies. We however need to enquire into why self-empowerment is more important than just guaranteeing the freedom to be and do. We could discuss the strength (and social value) of freedoms guaranteed through people's agency, rather than exempt from one's control. In addition, it opens the debate about the level and form of agency that matter for people's and groups' self-empowerment. I therefore argue that the research developed in this thesis lays the ground for a new grid of questioning and analysis for development policies and practices, regarding the central use of exchanges in assessing and designing the empowering process of the population.

8.4. Further research

As argued earlier, the research appeals for a comparison and validation of its results, through a replication of the study in another developing context and with different groups. Moreover, new concerns and questions would demand further research. This section discusses two promising projects that can build on and extend the work of this thesis.

On the one hand, the time involved in the process of the acquisition of capabilities has started to appear as an element that may additionally condition people's unequal opportunity and empowerment in exchanges. This concern may be approached from two

the freedom to shape one's own identity as a political community, the freedom to choose modes of leadership and representation that reflect the community's own conception of political legitimacy, the freedom to develop processes of communal deliberation and political decision-making that reflect one's own language and cultural norms, and the freedom to make laws and policies that best reflect the values and priorities of the members of one's own community.

Such a definition evidences the tight link between the definition of one's empowerment and the control s/he may experience over the criteria of the exchanges through which s/he may function. The author moreover argues that 'the collective capability for self-determination is precisely the sort of freedom Amartya Sen describes as both the primary objective and the principle means of development' (2014: 320).

different and complementary angles as an accountable resource at the level of individuals, or as historical levels such as leading to intergenerational gaps. Firstly, people have an unequal ability to transform time into opportunities to be and do what they value. It is the situation faced for example by unemployed workers. However, when time corresponds to one's opportunity to function, its treatment through different forms of exchange may aggravate people's unequal advantages and empowerment. For example, the treatment of time in profit-seeking exchanges reinforces the gaps between unequally endowed people: those with a lower set of resources may gain less, while they are likely to 'trade' a greater amount of their time. We could wonder whether this is also the case in the pursuit of non-profit-seeking exchanges, since these appear in the empirical data to be demanding a great deal of time in order to assure transparent exchanges, the transmission of information, education, and decision-making processes. Moreover, one's relative lack of time may prevent people from engaging in exchange and limits their empowering activities. This is so, even when they have accumulated the necessary resources and identified empowering opportunities. The Uruguai fishermen have expressed this, since their ability to carry out a sale is particularly conflicting with the time and energy-demanding fishing activity.¹⁸⁶ Consequently, disadvantaged people may spend more time on 'unvalued' and perhaps less rewarding functions. The market traders, who see the opportunity to employ others as gaining the time as a freedom to be and do what they really value, free of their trading constraints, have indirectly expressed this idea. To bring a more comprehensive measure of

¹⁸⁶ For example, a fisherman explains:

When there is not much fish, I sell it here, but usually when I come from the high seas, I sell it a reseller, because I will not be in a condition to sell it myself.

[Fish. 3]

inequalities, we should weight the time that people spend in valued as opposed to unvalued activities, 'alienating' involvement into exchanges.

Secondly, the empirical data illustrate that the time-inequalities relation is also salient when individuals or groups are in the process of acquiring the ability to pursue particular exchanges. Time allows people and groups to qualify, namely to accumulate resources and competence, which influences their different advantage and agency over exchange. A Camapet leader has expressed the disadvantage that their novice experience within the recycling industry has represented in term of opportunities.¹⁸⁷ This perspective on time may be crucial to think through age-related inequalities for example between juniors or seniors, or intergenerational transmissions of social disadvantages, which digs the gap between 'educated elites' and uneducated sections of society. We should therefore enquire into the disadvantage that time may represent in people's unequal empowering processes, and eventually question the way we could address or compensate such inequalities. This is particularly at stake as many countries now consider or adopt a 'restorative' approach of social inequalities. For example in Brazil, new development policies target special sections of the population, such as the black and indigenous communities, seen as having suffered discriminations and intergenerational disadvantage. These policies aim for example to address this gap in the market-sector by qualifying them

¹⁸⁷ The president of Camapet commented on this matter:

When Camapet started, we did not have much knowledge in the commercial sector. So, we started selling all the products directly to the middlemen. [They] saw the opportunity: (...) they bought from our hands and sold for twice the value to the factory. (...) Today, Camapet has a better structure to qualify the product and we now have a better reading of the market. (...) Time does not wait for us to get qualified, [we cannot] go back and make the process work [retroactively]. Most of the time, [we] learn through practice.

[Cam.1 Adm]

and promoting their entrepreneurship.¹⁸⁸ This may feed a discussion over the length of time necessary to any ‘restorative’ intervention regarding the compensation of social injustice. The concern for people’s (unequal) capabilities could try to include an account of time and gain from challenging the boundaries between distributive and restorative justice. The knowledge that this thesis has generated about the reproduction of people’s capabilities allows us to pursue further in that direction.

On the other hand, the knowledge generated about the ‘exchange - capability’ relation, and its inscription in struggles of powers, could help us to understand debates on the regulation of distributive spaces ruled through a householding form of exchange. We can for example quote the debate that the (mis)use of the ‘free-access’ to recyclable waste and public and/or unused lands generates.

The cooperative relies on the free-access to recyclable waste, slowly avoiding a generating conflicts of ‘ownership’ of waste by collecting the material directly from the hand of consumers rather than in the streets, where it is understood that people ‘abandon’ their ‘ownership’ over a good. The question was whether dropping waste automatically implies the duty and ‘property’ of the entity mandated for its treatment by the municipality of Salvador, or whether it could be picked up freely. Such concern for waste and the management of waste has become a prominent matter for development and in developing countries (See for example C. Wilson et al., 2006; Wilson, 2007).

¹⁸⁸ I have explored this argument in two conference papers. Firstly, I have presented a paper entitled ‘The nature of the emerging community development policies in Brazil: The case of the *candomblé* community in Salvador, Bahia’, at the 2014 IPSA World Congress. Secondly, I have presented a paper entitled ‘Shifts of development paradigm in Brazil: how are new Brazilian development policies affecting the acquisition and redistribution of human capabilities?’ at the ISA Annual Convention 2015. I have also discussed the prospect at looking at immanent forms of empowerment as a new way to inform policy and practice at the 2015 HDCA conference.

As a complementary example, Camapet actively participated in the claim to the right to use unused land, as when occupying an old hangar left abandoned by the government. Similarly, the Uruguai fishermen have negotiated with the government to tolerate their use of public space, in which they have illegally built their shed. They have put forth their collective and professional identity, rather than their private identity, to be granted an exceptional consent, in an area where the governmental project is to ‘prevent the invasion’ of dwellers, and to knock down shanty houses considered invasive.¹⁸⁹ Some members of Umoja are also targeted by the public debate over the use of public space by street entrepreneurs and street vendors (called ‘ambulantes’ in Brazil) for whom it constitutes a condition of their activity.

In Brazil, the constant use of private or public spaces by illegal dwellers and actors of the promotion of land/housing rights, illustrates the conflict of interpretation of the rules to access land, such as is guaranteed and legitimated by particular forms of exchange (e.g. property rights set in market exchanges or status rights in the case of public housing).¹⁹⁰ In parallel, the municipality of Salvador announced in 2013 its intention to regulate the use and presence of informal sellers occupying public spaces (streets, squares, etc.). It appeared as a slightly different conflict of interpretation between those that would argue that public space should be left available to the collectivity as a whole, or to serve each individual according to their ‘needs’. In the former interpretation, the right to use the space for private motives is banned because it may prevent others from enjoying it, while in the later, to the contrary, the common propriety should allow everyone to make use of it.

¹⁸⁹ For an overview of the governmental project funded by the World Bank which aims at restructuring the new and Old-Alagados areas, see (Kara José, 2008) and Jenkins et al. (2010).

¹⁹⁰ It is important to note that illegal land invasion in Brazil is not only a practice of the poor population, and does not only concern privately-owned but also governmental territories. A famous case in Salvador is the illegal construction of luxury condominiums in the nature reserve of Pituacu.

The use of a householding form of exchange, such as in the use of public space, may come to an unequal struggle of power over the legitimation of practices. Since such forms of exchange still grants people with unequal opportunities and empowerment, it represents a matter of development. It first invites us to consider the importance of the opportunities guaranteed by a form of exchange for different people in order to set the social and power conflict that it captures. For example, how shall we account for the imbalance between the opportunity to sell food for a poor person who mainly survives on this activity, compared to the claim of the fortunate neighbour annoyed by the activity at his local park, but who does not require to access public space to maintain his functionings. Moreover, the knowledge of the 'exchange - capability' relation generated in this thesis will help us to understand the unequal social impact that legalising one use of the resource at the expense of someone else's represents, and to arbitrate the legislative debate over transforming householding into another form of exchange.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Codes of the interviews ¹⁹¹

Case study key informants

	Code	Role	Date
Camapet Scavenger Cooperative	Cam.1 Adm	President	12/03/2013
	Cam.2 Adm	Accountant	10/04/2013
	Cam.3 Adm	Coordination	04/05/2013
	Cam.4 PU	Promotion unit members	06/05/2013
	Cam.5 PU		06/05/2013
	Cam.6 Adm	Commercial	15/05/2013
	Cam.7 BW	Selection unit members	15/05/2013
	Cam.8 BW		15/05/2013
Uruguai Fishermen	Fish. 1	Self-affiliated group members	04/04/2013
	Fish. 2		14/04/2013
	Fish. 3		14/04/2013
	Fish. 4		14/04/2013
	Fish. 5		15/04/2013
	Fish. 6		15/04/2013
Umoja groups	Umo. 1	Members of Group 2: 'So entre amigos'	20/04/2013
	Umo. 2		20/04/2013
	Umo. 3		20/04/2013
	Umo. 4		12/05/2013
	Umo. 5	Members of Group 1: 'Meninas da Laje'	08/05/2013
	Umo. 6		23/05/2013
	Umo. 7		23/05/2013
São Joaquim Market Place	S.J. 1 SO	Stand owners	18/02/2013
	S.J. 2 SO		19/02/2013
	S.J. 9 SO		20/02/2013
	S.J. 3 Emp.	Employees	19/02/2013
	S.J. 5 Emp.		20/02/2013
	S.J. 8 Emp.		20/02/2013
	S.J. 4 Car.		19/02/2013
	S.J. 6 Car.	Carriers	20/02/2013
	S.J. 7 Car.		20/02/2013
	S.J. 10 Union	Stand owner and president of the SINDIFEIRA	21/02/2013

¹⁹¹ In conformity with the anonymity and data protection terms agreed with the interviewees, the interviews have been anonymised.

Government additional informants

Code	Role/ Affiliation	Date
Gov. 1	Sub-Secretary of the State Secretary for Work in charge of Solidarity Economy (SETRE-SESOL)	17/04/2013
Gov.5	Projects manager dealing with socio-economic project to help artisanal fishermen in Bahia Pesca	21/05/2013
Gov.6		21/05/2013
Gov.7	State Secretary in charge of social development and of the fight against poverty / SEDES	19/04/2013
Gov.8	State Secretary in charge of Justice, Citizenship and Human Rights / SJCDH	29/04/2013
Gov.9	Sub-Secretary of the SJCDH in charge of consumers protection / PROCON	06/05/2013
Gov.11	Sub-Secretary of the SJCDH in charge of human rights / SJDHDS-SUDH	15/05/2013
Gov.12	Local federal secretary of the minister of work/ MTE-SRTE-BA	14/05/2013
Gov.13	Local federal secretary of the minister of work in charge of solidarity economy/ MTE-SRTE-BA	16/05/2013

Institutional additional informants

Code	Role/ Affiliation	Date
Part. 1	Technical coordinator of the Umoja project/ Association Casa de Taipa	05/04/2013
Part. 2	General coordinator of the Umoja project/ Association Santa Luzia	03/04/2013
Part. 3	Umoja Project development agent / Association Santa Luzia	03/04/2013
Part. 4	Projects managers charged by the State to support rotating funds of which the UMOJA project/ CARITAS	
Part. 8	Director of the federation of fisherman of Bahia / FEPESBA	23/05/2013

Appendix 2. Interview questions

Sub-research questions	Activities in the groups	São Joaquim market
How to define, identify and differentiate exchange practices?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you do in the group? What is your main activity? - How did you join the group? Why did the group welcome you? - What kind of relationship do you maintain with the other people involved in this group/ activity? - Does it mean you have to behave in a particular way? How and toward whom? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you buy or sell products, services? - How? To whom? - What kind of interaction do you develop with the others through that activity? Do you behave in a particular way?
To what extent can forms of exchange be associated with (unequal) functionings or sets of capabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does this activity help you to maintain (or progress toward) what you value being and doing? How? - Do you feel the activity opens opportunities and choices that you still have not explored? How? - Could you achieve the same without these activities/ the group? - Does this activity give you enough? Why? - Do you think this activity advantages some people? Is it at the expense of others? Who? Why? 	
To what extent the political context / the agents influence the exchange practices and the acquisition of capabilities within groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did you observe some changes in your activity influenced at a larger scale by politics or society? How? - Do you fight individually or collectively to implement or maintain this activity? Why? How? - How can you influence the rules of this activity? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think society and the state influence your activity in the market or the way the market is developing? How? - Is it difficult to maintain your activity? What can you do for that?

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